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ABSTRACT

This final report of the Family and Community Studies Project (part of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory) presents an investigation of the impact of three types of parent education programs on the participant families. The study examines the underlying change philosophy of each program and the changes that families participating in the programs are undergoing. Three processes of change were proposed as a focus of study: cultural elaboration, cultural reorientation, and cultural reinforcement. Case studies were done of actual programs that exemplified these three processes. Researchers obtained data through participant-observation and interviewing methods. Conclusions about impact were based on self-reported statements by participants concerning changes in their ideas or behaviors, and on analyses conducted by researchers concerning the match and mismatch between changes intended by programs and changes that parents reported. Each case study discusses: (1) the history, community context, setting, goals, organization, recruitment procedures, and curriculum of each program: (2) the lives of the parents who participate in the program: (3) a summary of the participants' evaluations and conclusions about the impact of the program: and (4) generalizations about the program and its participants as instances of the models of cultural change proposed. In addition, field work at a school-community liaison program is described in the Appendices. (Author/SS)

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FINAL REPORT

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY STUDIES PROJECT

SOUTHWEST EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY

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June 17, 1980

Dr. Bruce Mackenzie-Haslam
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Dear Dr. Haslam:

Submitted herewith is the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's final report for the Family and Community Studies Project (FACS). This report is in compliance with the terms and conditions of Grant No. OB-NIE-G-78-0108, which ended on November 30, 1979.

We shall be pleased to discuss this report and provide you with additional information, if requested.

Sincerely,

David L. Williams Jr.

David L. Williams, Jr. (Dr.)
Director
Division of Community
and Family Education

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Enclosures

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SEDL

SEP 29 1980

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PREFACE

The Family and Community Studies Project (FACS) evolved from previous work at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. This work involved the development of materials and providing training and technical assistance for parent education programs. Close to six years of practical field work experience provided staff members with an intuitive grasp of the effectiveness and the limits of educational programs intervening in the socialization of preschool children and their parents. Various evaluations of the effectiveness of specific materials and approaches in parent education had been undertaken in the course of this work. Yet, a comprehensive and systematic understanding of a greater issue was missing: what part programs in parent education played in the ongoing life of families and communities. In other words, the context for understanding needs of families and appropriate responses of the community to those needs was missing.

Furthermore, the appropriateness of public intervention into what American culture takes to be a private domain, family life, was increasingly being called into question as the 70's came to a close. While SEDL continued to promote parent education, supported in part by public monies, consulting with public agencies, and providing training and technical assistance to staff in public schools, FACS began to question some of the premises upon which parent education was based. Yet, it was clear as to whether the phenomenon of parent education was widespread, and not merely the creation of one or two bureaucratic agencies. Where public promotion of parent education did not exist, small programs seemed to surface with private sponsorship in the form of study groups or support groups in parents' homes or as parenting courses in community centers or churches. It was also known that some parents were seeking support and information from experts to help them better cope with parenthood. Others were buying specialized books and magazines in growing numbers to get parenting information.

Finally, as suggested in our introduction to families, parent education is but one of many cultural phenomena which function in the same way: as mediations (1) between the public and private life of individuals in American culture and (2) between the world of workplace or school and the world of home. Parent education was selected as a focus of research, not only because of FACS's familiarity with the people and the activities of parent education, but also because it represented one kind of linkage between family and society. By understanding, in a deeper way, the meaning of parent education in the 1970's, we could begin to understand both the changing family and the changing society which programs such as parent education attempt to mediate.

This final report of FACS' investigation of parent education covers a period of more than a year and a half of work which initially began in March, 1978. It includes some ten months of field work and several months analysis of findings, interpretation, and write-up. The report begins with Chapter I which is an overview of assumptions concerning families and society in Western culture, based, in part, on a review of recent sociological and historical literature. This discussion covers a brief historical review of parent education and recent problems of definition encountered in social science and educational literature. Chapter II discusses the development of our research questions, conceptual framework, and methodological approach to the research problem. Chapters III, IV, and V are three case studies of parent education programs, in which the findings and interpretations are presented in an attempt to answer the main research questions. Our field work in a fourth site is described and analyzed in Appendix I. This program yielded few insights into the central issues of our research--an unexpected development, given that the site was the only school-based program studied. Each case study makes its own discrete arguments and draws its own conclusions, but Chapter VI pulls together some general findings by comparing the three case studies and attempts to answer the central questions of our investigation. Finally, in Chapter VI recommendations are offered for policy considerations with respect to programs dealing with families and parent education.

At this point we would like to acknowledge our debts to the people who helped us shape and organize this work. Drs. Douglas Foley at The University of Texas at Austin and Russell L. Curtis at the University of Houston provided valuable insights as consultants in the initial stages of the research. Our greatest debt, however, is to Dr. Julie Stulac at Georgia State University in Atlanta. As a consultant, she became a source of guidance and help in developing and applying an ethnographic approach to our subject. In conversations with Dr. Stulac, we began to formulate our conceptual framework, and she also assisted us during the initial stages of data analysis and interpretation. Our SEDL colleague, Dr. Kay Sutherland, was always ready and available for consultations and provided valuable help throughout.

To the many people that let us into their classrooms and homes and shared with us their joys and pains, we are indeed indebted. Without their willingness to open up to us as informants our research would be reduced to a description of public behavior, cut off from its personal antecedents and individual meanings.

The program administrators and leaders, the gatekeepers who allowed us into their respective programs, were taking the risk that our insensitivity might result in a misrepresentation of something that everybody holds dear, their daily work. We hope that we have been fair. We entered these programs with an open mind, and attempted to see them from their perspective as well as ours.

Keeping the promises that were made at the onset of our research, efforts have been made to conceal the identity of both the actual programs and of individuals within programs.

Due to a sudden and inopportune major illness that befell the Senior Researcher for the project, the relative contribution of the three authors needs further elaboration. From the beginning it had been decided that each researcher would have the major responsibility for reporting the case study in which s/he had the greatest involvement. For that reason, each case study has an individual author. The responsibility for the rest of the report should have been shared proportionally by all three authors. However, because of the illness of the Senior Researcher and the departure of Andrea Meditch at the end of the contract period, it fell upon Kevin Batt to carry on a heavier burden. His disproportionate contribution to both substance and style is hereby acknowledged. Finally, in order to complete this work we have had to rely on the prompt and accurate typing, transcribing, and filing of protocols and transcripts that has been the responsibility throughout the project of our secretary, Lucy Newsom.

We thank Dr. David Williams, director of our division at SEDL, and our NIE Project Officer, Dr. Bruce Mackenzie-Haslam, for their continuing support and encouragement that enabled us to complete this research. We hope it will contribute to the understanding of parent education programs and the families whose lives they touch.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION: THE FAMILY AT WORK AND IN SCHOOL

One of the central premises of Western social science is the interrelatedness of all social phenomena. From the earliest kinship studies in 19th century anthropology, i.e., Lewis Henry Morgan, down to current discourse on the family (i.e., Aries, 1962; Zaretsky, 1976; Lasch, 1979), the institution of the family has been seen as variable in different times and places and dependent on other political and economic institutions of society. The variety of family forms in different cultures also allows us to see the variety of "families" in the American culture. There is no ideal family, nor any abstract "scientific" definition of family, that could adequately describe the lives of individual parents and children, caught in a myriad of different instances and circumstances of contemporary life in a complex society.

It was precisely this variety which inspired popular imagination in the late 1950's and early 1960's through such widely read photoessays as "The Family of Man" (Steichen, 1956). The concept of variant family forms brought to the public by anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, seemed to challenge and broaden Freudian reductions of social-psychological reality to patriarchal nuclear families. Yet, the nuclear family continued to be a cultural norm throughout this period of time, and other kinds of families were seen as deviant.

As cultural changes in the 1960's took place, cultural conservatives lamented the breakdown of the nuclear family and cultural radicals began to attack the nuclear family as the source of society's ills. Meanwhile, social science began to look at the "deviant" cases, families which were structured differently and may have seemed normal to those who were members, but struck outsiders as highly distinctive. The cross-generational family was identified, usually headed by grandmothers, popularly known as a matriarchal household. The extended family, common among ethnic groups in earlier decades, was rediscovered. Finally, the emergence of families of single parents was noted as increasingly frequent (Aschenbrenner, 1975; McAdoo, 1975, Shorter, 1975; Hoffman and Nye, 1974). Economic and sociological reasons for these varying family forms were proposed. Changing family structure could be seen as a strategy adapted to social and economic circumstances with respective advantages and disadvantages for maintaining the well-being of adult and child members (Zaretsky, 1976; Shorter, 1977).

The extended family was seen as a successful strategy for pooling resources and coping with poverty, both in the urban ghetto and in the agricultural migrant stream (Stack, 1974). Not all extended families remained intact when faced with the rigors of finding work and income. Frequently, men detached themselves from the family or were never integrated to begin with, resulting in lateral families with no male spouses, spanning three generations or more. Migration of a different sort, geographic and class "mobility," was the advantage in nuclear families (McAdoo, 1975; McQueen, 1971). While many nuclear families were embedded within networks of supporting extended families, residing perhaps in the same vicinity, others became increasingly isolated from any blood relations (Bernard, 1974; Shorter, 1977). The fissioning of nuclear families as the divorce rate increased in the fifties and the sixties led to single parent families. This development, too, was related to increasing work demands on husbands, isolation of wives in housework, and changing expectations about sex roles.

While none of the family forms are ahistorical and perfected structures, neither are they necessarily pathological as some ideologists would claim. More families succeed than fail at raising children and at recreating a culture in which children learn how to become competent adults. All families reproduce certain relationships with the larger social order as well. However, no family socializes the young, transmits culture, and reproduces society alone.

As Philippe Aries (1962) points out, the notion that the family had primary responsibility for the socialization of its children was an invention of the rising middle class in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. Even while individual families started to claim a greater share of responsibility for their own children from the community of adults, the institution of school expanded and pulled children into its domain. While parents worked, children came to have their own work, apart from the ongoing work of the community.

In America, schooling expanded in order to prepare different classes of children for different classes of work (Lasch, 1979; Bowles, 1974; Bowles and Gintis, 1976). As schooling strengthened its hold on the children of all classes, working class demands that education fulfill the egalitarian ideal of American democracy pulled public education away from an original purpose of class domination. Public education has continued to be a battleground ever since, frequently supporting the public order, transmitting the culture of one class, and raising the young to be obedient workers and consumers, yet sometimes undermining the public order, creating new culture, and sowing the seeds of rebellion among the young (Gorelick, 1977).

The usefulness of education to the dominant class and the hopes for education of the working classes combined to make school a preeminent social institution in American life. Schools socialize the young, and thereby create and maintain the shared cultural meanings which the young carry with them into adult life. Whereas the church had once claimed universality and demanded compulsory attendance, by the beginning of the twentieth century, school exercised the same dominion, at least over society's younger members (Lasch, 1977; 1978). Throughout the twentieth century school has demanded more years, more concentration, and more dedication from the young with each succeeding decade.

If the changing opportunities and demands of work have been a prime causal factor in changing the structure of the family, then school has been a major agent in the cultural changes which the family has undergone. Since the turn of the century, schools have increasingly emphasized nonacademic, "life adjustment" curriculum (Lasch, 1978). In addition to transmitting intellectual information, they have provided vocational training which is congruent with industrial recruitment, selection, and certification. Besides vocational training, schools also provide other "life training," such as home economics, bookkeeping, and health, which was formerly the province of the family or other community institutions with which the family was associated. Finally, counselors and teachers have influenced the basic values and life choices of students, ranging from career decisions to sexual attitudes.

In essence, schools have appropriated more and more of the cultural information which is transmitted to the young. They have also served to change the relationships between child and family. Ethnic minority children in particular may become acculturated to a dominant cultural tradition different from their parents. For all children, schools increasingly provide a context for socialization, especially peer socialization, which may differ in values from the family (Bronfenbrenner, 1970).

A number of experts in the field, Lasch and Shorter being the most recent, have called this attrition of socialization within the family a "transfer of functions" to other institutions. While this may be an oversimplification of a complex process, it provides a working base from which to begin to analyze what has happened to the family as a result of the changing relationships between family, school and work.

It has been suggested that one major trend has been the increasing role of the school in the socialization of the young. Also indicated was that the school, as a result of its participation in the socialization process, has affected the culture of families. In particular, the school has tried to assimilate children who were "different" and to "provide opportunities" that the family could not provide.

However, though schools instituted widely different types of programs (remedial, preschool education, tracking-open classrooms among them), it became increasingly clear to educators and parents alike that the school was not doing all that well in reaching its goal. As a result, starting in about the mid sixties, a movement toward "strengthening the whole family" set in. This meant very simply socializing adults. It was based on the underlying assumption that parents could not be good parents anymore without outside expert help. Educators, instead of looking to themselves for the failure to teach children, put responsibility on the family. The attempts to socialize adults which followed from this are based on similar premises found in the schools: "different" parents need to be socialized so that they will be in a position to transmit the values and behaviors of the dominant society.

The socialization of adults has become a major pastime in this society. Numerous therapeutic and education structures have arisen which seek essentially to mediate the relationship of families to school or work. They include marriage counseling, psychiatric services, adult education, courses in home management, and a wealth of literature on such subjects as child-rearing and family living. Within this category fall parent education programs. None of these resources address the social causes of family stress, for they do not try to change either workplace or school. Rather, they attempt to change the individual or the family.

It is becoming increasingly controversial whether such resources do in fact help support the family. Lasch (1977) has recently criticized the "helping professions" for adding simply one more layer of social control on the family. As such, they may impinge upon the autonomy and resourcefulness of families and undercut in one more way their ability to raise their own children.

The History of Parent Education

Parent education as a social phenomenon is not new. Its roots, though informal and unorganized, can be traced back to the 1800's. Brim (1965), Gordon (1977), and Schlossman (1976) have provided a historical background of parent education programs. Beginning in the 1880's, Stanley Hall popularized what might best be called an "evolutionary approach" to child development. Based on the then popular ideas of Darwin, he postulated the importance of hereditary bases of development, and argued for attention to the child's "natural needs." The first distinctly identifiable "parent education" movement, the child-study movement (Schlossman, 1976:440), utilized these concepts. The child-study movement was primarily interested in the physical development of the child, and in designing ways to improve child health, but it also adopted Hall's concern with the "contents of children's minds."

Hall's ideas were incorporated into the next major phase of "parent education" activities, given life primarily by the inauguration of the PTA in 1897. Schlossman describes in some detail the conceptual basis for the trends evidenced by the PTA. Of interest here are two general thrusts of the PTA. First, increased attention was paid to improving the quality of life in the home. This was best done by following the precepts of Deweyian psychology, which PTA members were encouraged to learn and apply at home. Second, this movement endorsed and promoted political activity on behalf of the poor. During this era, the PTA was explicitly aimed toward "bettering the life of the poor." In essence, middle class women were perceived as change agents, while lower class women were the recipients of the new social theories intended to improve the lives of children.

The emphasis in the 1920's shifted considerably from this earlier period. The theoretical base of the 20's revolved around the developing behaviorist psychology of Watson. The major emphasis was on teaching middle class women the tenets of the new psychology so that they could be in a position to raise their children according to its precepts. The interest in social reform all but died out; the previous concern for "mainstreaming" immigrant and poor children was no longer a focus. During this period, interest rested almost exclusively on preschool children; parents were encouraged to participate in nursery school programs in order to become more "professional" parents (by applying the new psychology).

Out of this history, two general features have become associated with the term parent education: 1) the desire to upgrade child care in the home by familiarizing parents with current notions of child development; and 2) social reforms which attempted to change the life experiences of poor or immigrant parents and children.

These two general features are of course the same features which mushroom again in the 1960's. As was to be expected, the form that these two trends took in the 50's was based on different social and psychological arguments. Hess et al (1969), Bronfenbrenner (1974), and others document at some length the research which underlies this period. Briefly, 1) the cognitive development of the child was considered to be the most crucial to the child's well-being; 2) the critical period for a developing child was postulated to be from birth to three or four years of age, 3) the parents, particularly the mother, were identified as the most important influence during that period, and 4) poor and minority parents were considered to be ill equipped to raise their children properly during this critical period, demonstrated, they argued, by the failure of poor children in school. Another influence in this period was the War on Poverty, which had as one of its strategies the local control of poverty programs. The response to this set of findings was the proliferation of programs using an education model and designed to aid poor children, particularly in terms of their cognitive development.

Given the social climate and a set of research findings which located

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the critical period in early childhood, the critical developmental feature in cognition, the crucial influence in the mother, and the outcome in school failure, it was not surprising that compensatory education programs arose in response. As is well known, the early childhood compensatory education programs were designed to have impact on the child, particularly on the child's cognitive development; they were direct intervention efforts focused on poor children. The influence of the War on Poverty strategies, combined with research arguing for the significant influence of the mother, served as the rationalization for including parents in the programs. As a result of the development of compensatory education programs and parents' involvement in them, the concept of parent education has become complex and confusing.

Current Literature on Parent Education

The rebirth of interest in "parent education" and related terms such as "parent participation," "parent involvement," and the consequent proliferation of programs, historically coincides with the onset of compensatory education programs. As a result, our current understanding of what constitutes programs which deal with parents (including parent education) is heavily influenced by its association with the educational establishment. As has been shown, the historical concept of "parent education" focused on upgrading child care and social reform directed to poor parents; it was not limited to educational establishments. In the 60's this concept was replaced by another term, "parent involvement," which included all activities (including school-based parent education) relating parents to the educational system. The literature describing these relationships between parent and school is the basis for our current understanding (and confusion) as to what constitutes parent involvement, parent education, and parent participation. This new term, "parent involvement," was both broader than the term "parent education" with reference to the range of activities included; but was also narrower, in that it restricted the definition to school-based activities. It is clear that parent education, while it may include teaching tutoring skills, is not limited to it, nor is it exclusively found in relation to school programs.

One of the main reasons for the confusion in concepts and terms has been the recent interest in activities which take place in compensatory education programs. Parent involvement is usually used to refer to participation of parents in educational programs directed primarily at their children; it may be used to describe the degree of control that different activities allow parents. It may be used as a synonym for parent participation in general. These activities may include some type of parent education. However, parent education as a concept and parent education programs are not found only within educational institutions.

We have opted for an understanding of the term parent education as "those activities that utilize educational techniques to effect changes in parent role performance," regardless of setting. The key phrase in this definition is parent role. Parent education focuses on the individual in his or her capacity as a parent. As Brim (1965) points out, this differs from focusing on the individual as husband, sister, or brother, as in the case in Family Life Courses, or on the individual as citizen (Pink, 1977) as is the case with most school governance activities.

As we have shown, the relationship between parent involvement and parent education in current usage is far from clear. In addition to lack of clarity over role, part of the confusion is due to the fact that parent education may be a component of programs (especially preschool programs) directed at children. In such cases, a parent involvement program may only exist as one aspect of a program directed at children, and the parent education program may be a part of the parent involvement component. Parent education programs, on the other hand, can have a completely independent existence, although most often they are associated with a variety of human service programs. Parent education programs usually are found in settings such as: (1) preschool education programs, (2) elementary education programs, (3) organizations associated with schools such as the PTA, (4) social service agencies, (5) community education agencies, (6) health service and health education agencies, (7) mental health programs, and (8) special interest groups, advocacy groups, or religious groups. Some of these programs are private and others are public; some are operated by professionals and others are staffed by volunteers; some require fees and others are free. What they all have in common is they use educational (as opposed to therapeutic) techniques to effect changes in the way parents perform in their role as parents.

The very proliferation of terms modified by the adjective "parent" as well as coinage and circulation of a new verb, "to parent" and its gerund "parenting," bespeaks the decade-long search for redefinition of the family and parental roles taking place in American society. Confronting this ambiguity of change and redefinition, this research project sought its own definition. We learned that finding the right research questions to ask was as problematic as determining an appropriate method for answering them. At the outset, however, we decided that the concepts and methods of anthropology permitted greater flexibility to explore the shifting issues of parent education, while at the same time requiring rigorous reflection on our own premises. We found that our ideas deepened as we spent more time studying our subject. The following chapter recounts the development of our research questions, our conceptual frameworks, and our methods of empirical inquiry as the project progressed.

CHAPTER II: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

A. Research Questions

Traditionally, scientific inquiry is organized around questions addressing the nature of a phenomenon. Determining what are the appropriate questions to ask is the first task of research. In a series of documents to NIE at the outset of the project, FACS refined the set of questions it was interested in. As the project progressed, new and related questions arose in meetings among staff members and with consultants.

Initially, we were struck by the number of parent education programs in a variety of settings, with various structures and curriculum. Our review of literature evaluating programs nationwide and our survey of local programs indicated that in spite of written evaluations suggesting that many programs were ineffective and not meeting their goals, old programs continued and new programs arose both in our own locality as well as across the nation. What was going on with parents that they sought out programs? What was happening in programs that seemed to satisfy parents? And finally, whose interests and purposes were promoted by the programs? These questions suggested that we meet with parents in programs and find out both their motivations for participation and their perceptions and evaluations of their experience in the program. Furthermore, as outside observers, we could record what happened in programs, so that we could assess our informants' self-reports in light of our own observations. Finally, we wanted to interview leaders or staff members to determine how they perceived programs.

A central question of the study came to be phrased as "what is the impact of Parent Education Programs?" We chose the concept of impact, initially as a way of moving beyond rigorous but limited evaluation designs. Such evaluative research normally relies on pre- and post-treatment administration of instruments with pre-determined categories of information, and they usually assess attainment of intended outcomes as defined by program administrators. The concept of impact allowed us to discover the functionally relevant categories of information for both parents and staff, whether or not these categories of effect were intended in the program design.

There was further interest in defining our question concerning impact with the emphasis on what impact rather than on how much impact. While many evaluations had sought to measure the impact of educational intervention on attitudes or behavior of parents or on behavioral changes in children, they attempted to quantify changes which may have had little to do with what goes on in a program or how parents themselves determine and understand the changes they enact. The "changes" or lack of change testified to by evaluators may be an artifact of the research design or they may miss entirely the nature of changes that are taking place. With observations and adequate program descriptions, "the effect" of a program could be grounded in the experience of participants. Our hopes for doing better depended in part on using the methodology of in-depth ethnographic inquiry to discover and represent participants' points of view.

Finally, there was a desire to look at each program and each parent as instances of broader social and cultural changes. Determining the impact of programs in terms of parents' beliefs and experiences would enable us to generate working models of cultural change concerning families in contemporary American society and the role that parent education programs play to promote or impede change.

B. Conceptual Models of Cultural Change in American Families

The development of our conceptual paradigms will be discussed here in some detail, because the models became both a conceptual tool and a product of our work. As a conceptual tool, they allowed us to see the particular programs being studied and the mothers interviewed as instances of phenomena that were not restricted to our limited empirical reach. As a product of our work, the models are offered as a classificatory device, a sort of typology of changes taking place in the parental roles of American families. Designed to effect change, parent education programs adopt a model of change and build an organization around its core. The model becomes a short way of expressing the fundamental change embodied by the program.

Parent education was never a unitary social phenomenon. With the proliferation of programs in the 1960's, the variety of programs also increased. We wanted to select for study programs that were representative of the spectrum of existing types. The first task then was to discover similarities and differences between programs and from these variations create a typology of parent education programs.

The initial attempt to construct a typology was based on a review of literature and a survey of local programs. The literature on parent education is written mostly by designers and administrators of programs, and therefore, it reflects their point of view. Preliminary interviews with leaders and staff members of local programs reflected the program point of view. It was not surprising that the typology based on this information reflected the intentions and ideals of the parent education practitioner.

This typology focused on the explicit messages about the parental role contained in the curriculum of programs. Three types of curriculum thrusts were identified: (1) Parent Education for Teaching, where the goal is to improve the role performance or skills of the parent as teacher. These programs are assumed to benefit the child directly by improving cognitive functioning or school-related skills and achievements; (2) Parent Education for Parenting, where the goal is to enhance the development or improve the role performance of the parent as a parent. These programs are assumed to benefit the child by improving the quality of parent-child relationship; (3) Parent Education for Self-Development, where the goals are to enhance the development of the parent as a person by improving their competence to interact with their children's school and other community agencies and services. A fourth type, parent education for parents of special or handicapped children, was thought to represent a unique case, from which we could not generalize to other families, so this type was excluded from our study. A fifth type is usually referred to as "education for parenthood" and is taught to high school students who are not parents at all. This fifth type was also excluded from our study.

The limitations of this typology were several: by focusing on what programs explicitly intended to do to or for parents, we overlooked the possibility that parents would define programs differently and certainly influence the social encounters taking place. By isolating and abstracting one ideological element, the programs' curriculum, we ignored many other contextual, organizational and ideological elements influencing the nature of the program; the categories only loosely fit the actual programs--virtually every program we knew of addressed each of these roles in the lives of parents to some extent. One consultant commented that this typology didn't give any feel for the "social animal" of parent education programs.

Next, we looked at "objective" characteristics such as the demographics of parents served, the frequency and duration of program activities, and the organizational structure and operation of the programs. Using these characteristics, we conceived the programs as social organizations akin to other human service organizations. Programs were located for which we had information along these organizational dimensions. It was discovered that publicly funded programs were more complex, more bureaucratized, and served low-income people, while privately funded programs were organizationally simpler and served middle income people. The organizational typology was tied to the curriculum variable of our earlier typology. It was noted that publicly funded programs with income guidelines usually trained parents in a tutoring role and emphasized cognitive development of children. Programs attracting middle class parents tended to emphasize either a parenting role or the development of the personal and social competence of parents as individuals. Another way of seeing this difference is to distinguish between child-focused curriculums for parent education and parent-focused curriculums for parent education. This new typology suggested additional questions about programs. What was the nature of the program's relationship with its sponsor and with its client community? What kind of administrative links affected the design and operation of the program and what recruitment procedures restricted the kinds of parents involved? What was the internal structure of roles and statuses of the organization, and what kind of relationship existed between leaders and members or educators and students? This data constitutes the "formal properties" of a parent education organization. These formal properties were seen as different from the categories of experience "functionally relevant" to parents and others participating in a program (Erickson, 1977). What relationship existed between formal properties and functionally relevant categories of participation was yet to be determined. The distinction is roughly equivalent to "etic" and "emic" categories of data, as these two terms are understood in ethnomethodology. (See Appendix III for a more detailed discussion of our use of these methods for organizing data.)

With our first two typologies it was felt that we had begun to understand some dimensions of variability in parent education programs. Based on these typologies, we proceeded to choose several sites for field work which seemed to vary along these dimensions. Nevertheless, our site selection was determined also by an intuitive grasp of differences that could not yet be articulated. Only after some field work experience were we able to construct more general models of cultural change.

In order to construct conceptual models as skeletal frameworks for viewing parent education and changing American family life, a number of assumptions were made.

First, it was noted that the processes of structural and cultural change suggested in Chapter I may or may not create difficulties for all families. On their own, some families are finding new solutions, new ways of adapting to change, or are rediscovering traditional strengths which provide support. Second, it was assumed that in the face of the kinds of changes described previously, however, being parents has become problematic for many adults. Third, their difficulties have also become a concern to social institutions which participate in the process of socializing children and adults.

In response to this situation, the past decade has seen the emergence of a large number of organizations, including parent education programs, which define the experience of families and parents as problematic, and which seek to solve these problems in a number of different ways.

Programs make their own assumptions about parents and about family life; they define their client population, the problem of parental responsibility, and the solutions to parental needs in systematically different ways; and these underlying differences account for the variability among programs.

Based on the earlier typologies and on insights generated by the ongoing field work that had already started in the programs selected, three processes of change were proposed. These processes were seen as underlying the programs under study. They were also seen as changes that families could undergo independently from any program. The three processes of change became a focus and a guide to our inquiry. They were labeled Cultural Elaboration, Cultural Reorientation, and Cultural Reinforcement. With these processes, the study could examine (1) the underlying change philosophy of each program, i.e., the program's solution; (2) the changes that families participating in the programs are undergoing, i.e., the family's solution; and finally, (3) the articulation between the solutions offered or implemented by the programs and those initiated by the families. The impact of parent education, then, could be viewed as how it enhances, retards, or alters the direction of changes which families are experiencing. The impact of a given program, then, is its actual influence over those different forms of change.

While a given parent education program may intend only one type of change, all three processes may be operating. The various cultures, needs and support systems of the participants all affect the changes they experience.

Our field work involved the ethnographic study of four different programs. During our regular team meetings and discussions, these processes of cultural change came to be used and referred to as "Models of Parent Education Programs." We saw that the core of each model was the process of change it represented, and that the actual programs as social entities were the embodiment of a given process of change. Thus, the slow derivation of the models was as much a result of our ongoing field work as it was a guide to it.

The models are presented here in their tentative form as they were formulated during our field work. Since each of the main programs studied was viewed as an instance of each of the three models, at the conclusion of each case study we will come back and reevaluate and readjust the models as they are informed by the insights produced by our research. That way, the models became grounded theory, a distinct advantage of the ethnographic mode of our inquiry. The following three models were proposed:

1. Cultural Elaboration

Many parents have been faced with profound changes in the structure of their families and in various members' relationships to work. Single parent families have lost one adult from the household; other families have seen a second parent go to work outside the home, many of them mothers of young preschool children. Some fathers have been forced to migrate to find work elsewhere, while both working fathers and mothers have seen changes in the amount of time they work, in their shifts and in their schedules. These families have found it necessary to elaborate new cultural images, values and practices in order to adapt to their new circumstances. Increasingly isolated from strong networks of kin, many of the old practices have become obsolete or ineffective.

Single parents find great disjunction between the traditional images of "whole" families and their current situation. Working mothers find the time available to spend with their children dramatically decreased, and adjustments are needed. Migrating fathers see their limited participation in family life further restricted.

All of these families face increasing demands to be met with decreasing resources. The problem of these families is that they might fall apart, unable to coordinate work demands with family life, demands of child care and discipline, and still meet their own needs as individuals and as spouses. The problem is one of management of scarce resources.

The solution offered by Cultural Elaboration Programs is to rework and elaborate the contents of the parental roles to make better use of the scarce resources. This solution is implemented through short courses focused on techniques: of discipline, of communication, of value clarification, of problem-solving. The purpose of these techniques is to improve the quality of family relationships, especially mother-child relationships.

The changes advocated by Elaboration Model programs can be described as adding to the repertoire of behaviors and techniques that parents can use; there is no outright rejection of any values or lifestyles, but rather the addition, as possible alternatives, of new forms of childrearing better adapted to the reduced resources available, such as less time, fewer kin, less income.

The Cultural Elaboration Model assumes self-motivated participants and requires a responsive community. The frequency and diversity of these programs follows the demand for such services, and they are usually offered through community based organizations and social service agencies.

2. Cultural Reorientation

Some of the most severe family "problems" have been identified among subordinate populations. According to certain commentators, low-income, and/or ethnic families are failing in their basic function to socialize children into competent human beings. The most prominent of these theories find fault either with the low income/ethnic family's structure ("the matriarchal household") or its deficient culture ("cultural deprivation"). Few anthropologists accepted these theories when they were first promulgated, and a wide-ranging critique has been carried out in their aftermath (Valentine, 1969; Leacock, 1971). Nevertheless, the theories entered into public consciousness. More importantly, they became cornerstones for many social and educational programs, primarily sponsored by the state.

If the family was failing in its socialization function, then the state would help compensate. While the most blatant pronouncements found the low-income family incapable of providing a foundation for viable life as an adult, the problem was not socialization in its largest sense, but rather socialization to values and behaviors necessary for successful school and work performance. While some programs sought to compensate "deficient" children directly, others adopted a parent education model.

In this model of parent education, parents are assumed to be inadequate agents to socialize their children for successful adaptation to the dominant culture. With the problem defined in that way, the solution is to reorient parents towards the dominant culture's educational and work-related values and to equip them with the appropriate skills to raise their children to adapt to the dominant culture.

The nature of the change involved in the reorientation model can be described as the replacement of old practices with new ones. There is an implicit assumption that the new practices require giving up incompatible old ones, that the new practices are inherently superior, or at least that they lead to better results. There may be a conflict between alternative ways of behaving that lead to divergent results. The program's solution is that the old must be given up and replaced with the new which is perceived as better, more adequate, more efficient.

3. Cultural Reinforcement

The traditional nuclear family where the husband is the bread winner and the wife is the manager of home and children has decreased to a bare sixteen percent of American households (Howard, 1978). This is a fact of contemporary social life. These families have not taken easily to their newfound minority status. What they believe to be not only viable but the optimal structure in which to raise children is being challenged by the media, by the women's movement, and by the empirical evidence of family erosion among their friends and acquaintances.

The problem is society's loss of faith in the myth of the happy nuclear family and a general lowering of the status of full-time motherhood as an occupation. These families feel the need to protect the image of the "right" or "normal" family, their very own lifestyle.

One solution is to reinforce the family by returning to traditional images. Church sponsored grass roots "pro-family" crusades and organizations are examples of such tactics.

Another solution involves advocacy groups lobbying on behalf of parents and families, and groups and organizations that promote the recognition of the importance of motherhood. One tactic is to equate it with other professions. This "professionalization" of motherhood involves consciousness-raising and building social support in coalitions and networks.

The nature of the change involved in the Cultural Reinforcement Model can be described as an increase in the value accorded to full time motherhood. The social desirability of that status is stressed, and support is sought from other people and organizations with similar values to defend that way of raising children and the way of life associated with it.

In summary, the Cultural Elaboration and Cultural Reorientation models seek to operate on the content of the parental roles, the values and practices that guide parents' behavior with their children. The Cultural Reinforcement Model, on the other hand, operates on the value accorded by society to the enactment of the parental role in the form of full-time motherhood. In other words, it attempts to raise the status of motherhood, rather than to change the nature of the mother's behavior toward her children.

Chapter III is a case study of a Cultural Elaboration Program, called the Effective Parenting Course. Chapter IV is a case study of a Cultural Reorientation Program labeled with the pseudonym, the Mother Child Development Program. Chapter V is a case study of a Cultural Reinforcement Program, labeled the Association of Mothers. In each case study, the name of the program and the people in the programs have been changed, in accord with promises of anonymity that the investigators made to informants.

C. Methodological Procedures

1. Site Selection

The parent education programs selected for this study were chosen to represent a cross section of the types of programs currently in operation across the country. For practical considerations, the actual programs considered for inclusion were all located within a 100 mile radius of Austin. In a previous project, a total of thirty-five programs had been identified. Upon closer examination, sixteen were selected as meeting our definition of parent education program as "organized activities that utilize education techniques to effect changes in parent role performance." Preliminary data from these programs was used to generate the typology described in the previous section. The final selection of the programs to be studied was a compromise between our desires and the actual willingness to cooperate on the part of the program "gatekeepers," those individuals with the power to authorize our research activities.

The Mother Child Development Program was selected because it met all the characteristics of a complex program and its director was willing to cooperate. The Community-School Liaison Program was selected because it seemed representative of the parent education programs found in schools, often funded by federal programs such as Bilingual Education, Title I and Follow Through. The Effective Parenting Course seemed a clear case of a simple program sponsored by community organizations without outside funding. It held the greatest promise of attracting fathers, single parents and working mother couples. Finally, the Association of Mothers had many of the characteristics of simple programs, yet it seemed to be getting more complex, expanding, branching out. It was selected because it seemed to be a unique "grass-roots" organization and their leaders were willing to be studied. (See Appendix II for details of field plan implementation.)

2. Participant-Observation

A major concern in this study had to do with the comparability of the data generated by different forms of observation or levels of participation. The researchers were introduced as such in all programs. For the purposes of the interviews with participants, prior approval was sought and obtained from each individual. Participant-observers in all sites conversed and entered into discussions with other participants but maintained a generally low profile to avoid drawing attention to themselves.

The nature of the event being observed made the role of observer more or less evident. In the case of the MCDP where the same group of people met daily, the presence of the observer was obvious. General meetings of the Association of Mothers or Advisory Council sessions of the School-Community Liaison Program, on the other hand, which are open to members, prospective members and visitors alike, made the presence of the FACS observer less noticeable.

3. Interviewing

Interviewing program participants was seen as the most important source of data for FACS research. To insure comparable quality data for all sites, interview schedules were developed for both parents and staff for all the programs. General interview strategies and analytic procedures were applicable to both types of interviews.

FACS assumed that the most important interview strategy was to find areas in which interviewee and interviewer could communicate extensively, in which the interviewee volunteered information rather than it always being elicited. The instructions stressed the researcher's interest in finding out about the experiences of parents, and in particular mothers. The general order of the interview questions was designed to ease the conversation by starting with those things that parents feel most comfortable in discussing--their children. The next section of the interview dealt with some of their feelings about motherhood and moved to explore their perception of the resources available to them as parents. From there, the interview moved to questions about the specific program, inquiring first about previous experiences in similar programs, and the actual initial contact and recruitment. (See Appendix IV for interview schedules.)

An important part of communicating involves the interviewer's listening for key words of the informant and feeding them back in the form of a question or as a request for greater elaboration or more specificity. Alternate phrasings of questions in the interviews allows not only for a more natural delivery of a question by the interviewer after assessing the flow of conversation, but it also allows rephrasing of questions if the respondent does not "click" with the question or misunderstands it. FACS found that such flexibility improved the quality of information as opposed to a mechanical delivery of set questions since each interviewer knew the category of information sought and could modify delivery of a question in order to tap such information.

A second strategy adopted by FACS was to "go with the flow" of informants' remarks. FACS considered volunteered information to be more valuable than elicited information because it may signal functional relevance in the participants' own terms. Should an informant begin talking about an area of interest to FACS out of the sequence of questions, then questions were resequenced in order to follow the informant's lead. Thus, if remarks about some aspect of a parenting program came up before the set of questions dealing specifically with the program, then the interviewer would pursue, at least momentarily, the relevant information volunteered by the informant.

The structure of interview data from each informant derived from a dynamic interplay between questions and answers that elicit new questions. The flow of contents along the informant's own associations, rather than along the preconceived structure reflected in the order of the questions in the schedule, forced adjustments in the process of data crunching. Interview protocols had to be scanned for relevant contents produced not only as responses to a specific question or set of questions, but also in other parts of the interview. This characterizes semi-structured interview data analysis as opposed to the classification of short responses generated by questionnaire-type items used in surveys.

The Spanish language dominance of some respondents in both the Mother Child Development Center and the Community-School Liaison Program necessitated that the interview schedule for mothers be translated to Spanish. Some minor inaccuracies resulted from inconsistency between the English and Spanish versions. When necessary, interviews were conducted in Spanish. Since the cost of a transcribing service in Spanish would have been prohibitive to the project and the analysis and comparison necessitated examination of all transcripts from a given program, interviews in Spanish were translated first into English and then transcribed. Care was taken to insure that the translations were accurate. The help of several Mexican-American SEDL staff members was enlisted to elucidate the more complicated segments. This assistance enabled the Hispanic project staff to complete the necessary translations.

The same basic interview schedule was used with parents in all the programs, with necessary adjustments for the two fathers interviewed in the Effective Parenting Course. The staff interview had to be modified to fit the particular roles that staff had in the various programs. In one case, that of the Association of Mothers, the leaders that made up the Board were considered to be the staff. However, they shared all the characteristics of members in that they were mothers first and staff second. A modified form that combined pertinent aspects of each interview schedule was used with these informants.

4. Data Analysis

The data gathered in field research consists primarily of interview protocols, field notes, and written documents produced by or about the organizations under study. The interview data are self reports about facts, perceptions, and feelings that respondents disclose. Field notes contain records of public events that were observed, records of conversations, and observer impressions and interpretations of various social events. Documents provided some information about the formal properties of the organizations. All these sources of data contain categories of information necessary for analysis. In order to group, classify and analyze this wealth of data, FACS developed a preliminary set of coding categories intended to be applicable in varying degrees to all three data sources. As the analysis proceeded, some coding categories were added, others deleted, and others merged.

It was soon clear that the systematic coding of all interview protocols with all predetermined coding categories would have been a giant undertaking and only possible with the use of some form of advanced word processing technology as yet unavailable to us. Instead, it was decided to focus on a specific thematic unit as a means of analyzing the data.

The motivation to participate in a given program and the circumstances surrounding that participation were identified as a thematic unit that cut across all four programs under examination. This topic was chosen as the focus of the first analysis and comparison across programs. Each interview protocol available was examined. The segments that referred to the circumstances surrounding each individual's decision to become involved in the program was cut, placed on a separate sheet and identified with the protocol and page number. Three interviews were scanned by two different researchers in order to check on the accuracy of the identification of relevant passages. The only problem encountered was the need to separate, for analysis purposes, responses concerning the initial decision to become a participant from statements that referred to reasons for continuing to participate or about the intensity of their participation. In other words, data referring to feelings following a participant's initial commitment were excluded from this analysis. It was deemed important to separate the reasons why people came to the programs in the first place from those that kept them there afterwards.

Each passage selected from the interview transcripts was examined. The first sorting of units separated out statements of reasons and motivations attributed to other participants, along with statements about reactions from other family members and friends that helped or hindered a participant's enrollment. After this initial sorting, the category left concerned direct responses about why people participated.

A second sorting separated these responses into four broad areas of motivation: (1) expected benefits for the child(ren), (2) benefits to the mother/parent, (3) general conditions that seemed to predispose participants to involvement, and (4) diffuse curiosity coupled with a "nothing to lose" attitude.

A third examination of responses permitted a tentative classification of statements within each of the three previous areas of motivation. Key words and phrases used by respondents were listed. Some of these responses indicated specific feelings motivating parents to join a program. Others referred to more objective conditions in the individual's personal life and social environment. Both psychological states and social causes were mentioned by respondents. Expected benefits to be gained from participating in the program ranged from very diffuse to very specific hopes.

While there was clear variation among individuals' styles of speaking, the same words and phrases kept recurring, thus allowing patterns to emerge from the data. With few exceptions, responses in sub-categories clustered according to programs, in spite of the random procedure used to sort the data. No attempt was made to separate responses according to programs, yet the relative homogeneity of problems, styles, and expectations in each program is not surprising, given the differences among program intentions and populations served.

The datails of this analysis were reported in the FACS Interim Report, June, 1979. This work underscored the need to focus analysis of interview data on the most relevant categories for understanding each individual's experience in the programs.

The next cycle of analysis used a different strategy. This time, no attempt was made to mask the program of origin of a given protocol. Instead, the analysis was conducted using all the protocols for each program as a group. For each person, a profile sheet was prepared, summarizing the information on childrearing attitudes and concerns. Individuals within each program were compared and the major themes that emerged were noted. The major parental concerns and values were identified, and through the use of individual case studies the relationships between personal histories and current circumstances were illustrated. The advantage of this strategy is that it keeps an intact picture of individual participants, and it allows for relating antecedent conditions to consequences that are observed in the lives of these parents. At the same time, the nature of program impact could be better illustrated and its limitations understood.

Conclusions about impact are not based on an empirical pre- and post-test measure, but derive from self-reported statements by participants concerning changes in their ideas or behaviors, and from analyses conducted by researchers concerning the match and mismatch between changes intended by programs and changes that parents reported.

The self-report information from participants represents a particular kind of information. Information concerning program effect that was spontaneously offered by participants was seen as especially significant. Information that was elicited by interviewers' extended probing was seen as of secondary importance, since parents were responding to predetermined "effects" suggested by interviewers' questions. When very little information was forthcoming from parents during interviews, then the impact of the program in a particular area of change was considered negligible. Out of these analyses of transcripts, case examples of participants and general statements of impact were derived.

5. Interpretation: Synthesizing Analyses into Case Studies

After spending a considerable amount of time getting familiarized with the places and people that were studied, observing regularities and unusual events, and interviewing a sample of them, the task of making sense of the information gathered was formidable. An equally consuming task is communicating our research to a reader. We have chosen to present our findings for each program in detailed form as case studies. For three programs, we have attempted to present somewhat parallel treatments, following a structure that moves from the formal properties of the programs to the individual and collective characteristics of the participants. In two of the programs we use individual case histories to illustrate the relationships between personal antecedent conditions and current experience. A fourth program proved to be a special case, and is treated in a succinct manner in Appendix I.

The first section of each case study presents and analyzes the history, community context, setting, goals, organization, recruitment procedures, and curriculum of each program. Each program's design and intentions were relatively accessible during the course of field work. Not only were staff members and leaders well-versed and articulate in explaining the program to outsiders, but some documents spelled out rationale, procedures and content of the program. One can interpret this abundance of data as evidence for programs being overdetermined; that is, each aspect of the program tends to coincide and reinforce every other aspect. The program as a whole directs itself actively to parents, selecting out certain elements of culture to try to effect and ignoring other elements. In other words, the program seeks to make a difference in social reality by mounting an organized effort and subduing its own internal contradictions. The task of critically analyzing a program like this is to reduce it to its most important determinants (its core messages) and to discover what contradictions, if any, it is trying to overcome with such "determination."

The second and third sections of each case study investigate the lives of the parents who participate in the program. Evidence relevant to their point of view was less readily available to outsiders. Participating mothers did not strike up conversations with the ethnographers as readily as did staff members or leaders. They were not practiced in articulating responses to interviewers' questions. The mothers who were interviewed had no ideology, role, or written standard to represent, other than their own point of view. In this sense, they responded less self-consciously than did staff members.

The information gathered in interviews with these mothers is inconsistent at times. Although they did not have a program ideology to represent their experience in the program influenced and provided the context for many of their responses. The interview strategy was designed to minimize the conscious use of "program" language, by not asking anything about the program until the last part of the interview. Nevertheless, some of the interviewees brought up the program spontaneously in response to other questions about themselves and their families.

If we are to account for these mothers' points of view, independently from the program, it is analytically useful to conceive of their perspectives as underdetermined, in contrast to the overdetermination of the program. Rather than reducing redundancies and uncovering contradictions, the task of analysis is to (1) infer their perspective from incomplete evidence, (2) suggest the linking of cultural and structural determinants in their point of view, and (3) explain possible inconsistencies in terms of "lived" contradictions in the process of resolving themselves. In the course of this interpretive task, the role of the program in their lives becomes clear.

The fourth section of the case studies summarizes participants' evaluations and draws conclusions about the impact of the program. Finally, the fifth section of each case study generalizes about the program and its participants as instances of the models of cultural change which we have proposed.

CHAPTER III: THE EFFECTIVE PARENTING COURSE (EPC):
A CASE STUDY OF CULTURAL ELABORATION

by Renato Espinoza

Outline

- A. The Program
    - 1. History, Setting and Community Context
    - 2. Course Goals
    - 3. Curriculum
    - 4. The Sessions

- B. Characteristics of The Participants
    - 1. The Course Instructor
    - 2. Characteristics of Parents
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            - Participant's Childhood: Their Parents as Models
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- C. Parental Concerns
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        - a. A Working Mother
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        - c. A Single (Divorced) Working Mother
        - d. A Stay-At-Home Mother

- D. Program Impact
    - 1. Evaluative Comments About the EPC
    - 2. Program Impact

- E. The Effective Parenting Course as Cultural Elaboration

A. The Program

1. History, Setting and Community Context

The River City Parent-Child Association periodically sponsors courses on parent education. The courses meet once a week, for six weeks, in any of a variety of different community settings. Participants pay a fee when they enroll for classes. Trained facilitators run the courses following a manual, with topics that range from discipline to problem-solving to children's sexuality. While the curriculum specifies general topics, the format of the class is open to additional parental concerns brought up by the participants.

The Effective Parenting Course evolved from several years of similar activities in which one of the founders of the River City Parent-Child Association had a prominent role. This man, a counseling psychologist in private practice, teamed up with a Mental Health/Mental Retardation Public Information worker to structure a series of courses. In the process, they wrote the manual that served as the textbook for the course. The manual, now in the process of being rewritten and updated, constitutes the official text of the Effective Parenting Course. The authors of the manual have been active in the parent education movement in the city. They have also taught a special course for lay leaders of Effective Parenting Courses in the belief that advanced training in psychology is not a necessary requirement for successful performance of that role.

The instructor for the course completed this training program. She first participated as a parent in one course, took the instructor's course, and then co-led a group with the junior author of the manual. The present course was the first one where she had total responsibility.

The course was offered by the River City Parent-Child Association. The

RCPCA is a voluntary community organization whose stated purpose is:

> ...to promote freedom of choice in the child birth experience based upon a knowledge of alternatives. Having a child is a family experience both biologically and emotionally. Therefore, RCPCA supports good parental education for both husband and wife, maximum participation by parents in the birth experience in line with good medical practice, avoidance of unnecessary separation of mother and child, support for the breast feeding mother, and strengthening of family life.

In line with stated purposes, the RCPCA sponsors Introductory Childbirth classes, Lamaze classes, a Cesarean birth support group, Potty Training workshops, and the Effective Parenting Course.

In the past, the Effective Parenting Course (EPC) has been offered directly to the public using a variety of community facilities. The particular course observed in this study was offered through the River City Community School System. The Community School System consists of thirteen sites located throughout the city. Each site serves during the day as a regular elementary or junior high school, and during the evenings offers a variety of courses. The Community School System is open to any organization that wants to sponsor a course using the school facilities. The RCPCA took advantage of this policy to offer the Effective Parenting Course. Other courses offered by each community school are designed to meet the needs and desires of the immediate community, determined through periodic surveys and an Advisory Board for each school. The last session (Fall 1979-80) saw over 4,000 people registered for 437 courses in 13 sites.

Driftwood Community School was chosen because its central location could accommodate people from all areas of the city. All the sessions took place in the Community School building, using a regular fifth grade classroom for the first two meetings and the school library for the remaining sessions. An extra session agreed upon by the participants took place in the home of one of the couples participating.

The course fee covered the cost of a manual, handouts and a subscription to the monthly RCPCA Newsletter. There were no babysitting arrangements for the six weekly sessions that lasted from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on successive Wednesday evenings.

The Effective Parenting Course is offered to the general public with no restrictions. It is directed to parents of young children, two to six years of age. Couples are encouraged to enroll by a "couple fee" that is only a few dollars over the regular individual fee.

The evening hours were designed to allow participation by working parents. Announcements for the course were made using city-wide radio and TV public service announcements and press releases to city media. The Community Schools listed the Effective Parenting Course among their regular offerings. The sponsoring organization, RCPCA, announced the course in its regular monthly newsletter and it was also listed in other family and parent-oriented organizations in the city. Examination of available data for the group of participants under study revealed that participants had responded to the following recruitment mechanisms: two participants saw TV spots, two were referred from other RCPCA activities (Potty Training and Lamaze classes), one was referred by Planned Parenthood, one was referred by a friend who was a member of RCPCA, one was referred by a private marriage and family counselor, and one was referred by a Welfare Department Case Worker.

Prior to formal enrollment, the participants were contacted by the RCPCA Course Coordinator and by the Course Instructor. The purpose of this contact was to make sure that the children were within the age range for the course and to establish a personal contact with the instructor, who attempted to determine the overall nature of the parental concerns prior to the beginning of the sessions.

2. Course Goals

According to the course manual, the goal of the course is "to introduce and practice a variety of parental tools, tools that make life easier for both parents and children." One of the participants reports that the class was described to her by the RCPCA Course Coordinator as:

> ...just a bunch of parents getting together with one lady that was a parent that had taken the course already and had wondered why only men were teaching it. In the course you mainly just discussed problems that would come up and maybe someone else would have a solution.

The instructor, on the other hand, described her goals for the course as:

> ...an opportunity to present some information that participants can apply to their own lives and to allow them to talk about the things that are bothering them and to get feedback. Because sometimes just talking about frustrations and whatever helps the person view them in perspective. I feel very strongly that I need to present some content in the class. I am excited about the content. I think that it can be applied to everybody. It is not some kind of total answer, but I think it can give people some insight, and then let them talk about that insight, or about the way it didn't work, or about other things that they have tried, and to kind of present a forum. I think it is important to sometimes challenge them or their thinking. And I think that it is important also to give them support, like saying... well, that's really a problem, I can tell it bothers you. Maybe that is why she took the course, and what she needs more than an answer is at least some understanding.

3. Curriculum

The manual for the course was written in 1977. The current edition is typewritten and it contains no illustrations. The manual is undergoing some rewriting and restructuring. The copy furnished to participants is a Xerox copy with pagination that indicates a rearrangement of chapters and contents.

The chapters of this current version were: 1. Interpreting Child Behavior; 2. Child Management: Building Self-Control; 3. Child Management: Dealing with Unacceptable Behavior; 4. Communication in the Family; and 5. Family Problem-Solving. The foreword indicates that it is written to serve as a manual for a course. A list of "parental tools" clearly indicates that the content of this manual has been largely based on some popular parenting books. In the text, however, there is no formal acknowledgment or bibliographical references, or suggested readings. The "parental tools" listed are:

1. Interpreting child behavior
2. Establishing positive attention economies
3. Arranging the environment
4. Providing choice and responsibility
5. Establishing routines
6. Establishing chores
7. Allowing natural consequences
8. Selective ignoring
9. Establishing rules and consequences
10. Quiet correction
11. Maintaining a positive tone
12. Family meetings
13. Active listening
14. Self assertion
15. Negotiation
16. Problem-solving

Although the manual is the "official" content for the course, the instructor acknowledged the source of many of the ideas and concepts in previous authors. As a rule, at the beginning of the course a list of "useful" books is provided, and participants are encouraged to add to it those titles they have personally found to be useful.

She said:

> We are not inflexible as far as the information or the ideas. We'll take a good idea from anywhere and talk about it, or a solution, or a way of looking at it, and talk about it and see if it might help someone in the class.

The following books were listed on the board the first session:

Parent Effectiveness Training, Thomas Gordon

Dare to Discipline, James Dobson

Strong Willed Children (No author could be recalled by instructor.)

How to Father, Fitzhugh Dodson

People Making, Virginia Satir

Declare Yourself (No author could be recalled by instructor.)

How to Parent, Fitzhugh Dodson

Ourselves, Our Children, Boston Women's Health Book Collective

Help, I'm A Parent, Bruce Narramore

In addition to these books, the following titles were listed for a previous course taught by the junior author.

Children the Challenge, Rudolph Dreikurs

Discovering the Me in Relationships, J. Narciso

Child Management, Judith and Donald Smith

How to Raise Children at Home in Your Spare Time, Marvin J. Gersh, MD

4. The Sessions

The first session of the course took place in a regular fifth grade classroom in the Driftwood Community School. Prior to the arrival of the participants, the instructor arranged the chairs in a semicircle facing a central chair (for her) in front of the blackboard. As the participants arrived, she finished writing the bibliography. On the other side, she wrote the list of "children's needs" that would be the content for the first session. She proceeded to introduce herself as "...not really an expert." She added that she found out that the two people teaching the EPC course for the RCPCA were men and she thought that there should be a woman doing that, too. She said that she was a mother, so she decided to get a little training and get involved. She continued by saying that what we are going to talk about was really based on sound knowledge, not a radical parenting ideology or psychological position, but rather only what works for some people. She said she expected they would be looking at the beliefs that each one held with an open mind, and that maybe by the time they were through they could consider other alternatives to the things that they used or believed in. The danger of relying on only one strategy or tool, she said, was that it begins to determine the way you look and interpret the world; "if the only tool we have is a hammer, we tend to see things as nails." she said.

Following this declaration of purpose, she asked the participants to introduce themselves. After that, she asked the researchers to introduce themselves.

Following a brief recess, the group reassembled in the room. The instructor asked each participant to write down a specific behavior that one of their children exhibits and what each parent does in response to that behavior. After that, she proceeded to explain the content for that first session, the needs of children. These are the need for limits, need for attention/affection, need for dependency, and need for mastery/power. In addition to the discussion generated by the specific concepts provided by her, the problem of temper tantrums drew opinions and anecdotes from the participants.

The second session took place in the same classroom and the seating arrangement was similar. The topic was setting limits and establishing rules, and the observation that children constantly test limits. Then she drew a contrast between punishment and discipline: the purpose of the first is to inflict pain, while the purpose of the second is to change behavior. Among the problems and concerns brought up by the participants were the need to express anger, the use of threats, and protecting babies from older children who spank them.

The third session took place in the school library, and the seating arrangement was similar, except that the distance between participants and instructor was greater. The content was devoted to completing the discussion of the needs of children as the key to understanding behavior. This was the necessary precondition to using any of the "tools" that she had written on a large flipchart mounted on an easel. Under the title, "Managing the Child--Parental Tools for Discipline," the following were listed:

1. Arranging the environment
2. Quiet correction-proximity control
3. Positive reinforcement-praise
4. Ignoring-extinction
5. Natural consequences
6. Logical consequences-spanking
7. Chores and routines
8. Communication-counseling and guidance

9. Providing choice and responsibility
10. Set rules
11. Commands (or mini-rules)

Later she added "modeling" to the list of tools.

Among the problems and concerns brought up by the participants were the problems of correcting/disciplining children in front of other people, about order in the house and the place of children in the home environment, and about problems created by transitions such as moving.

The fourth session took place in the library, but had to be moved later to the original fifth grade classroom. The topic continued to be the tools listed above that were not covered in the previous session. After the recess, a "test" exercise was presented consisting of a description of a situation followed by four alternative tools. The task for the group was to pick the best one. Among the problems brought up by the participants were whether or not to teach obedience to authority figures and learning trust.

The fifth session took place in the library. It started with the conclusion of the unfinished exercise that was begun the last session. Then the instructor moved into the topic for the session which was communication and its role in family conflicts. The examples used generated a great deal of participation dealing mostly with issues of working and non-working mothers and the feelings associated with it. Among the problems mentioned were the need to mix intellectual self development pursuits with low level child care tasks, giving up careers temporarily to devote full time to childrearing, and finding time to devote individual attention to each child.

The sixth session took place in the library, but it was conducted by the junior author of the manual. The instructor had requested him to do the session because she did not feel comfortable with the topic. After a brief round of introductions, he went into the content of the session by asking participants how they had learned about sex. The loose discussion then moved into the fact that sexuality was part of normal development and that exploration of the body and manipulation may be expected to occur. Children also learn about sexuality from their parents and many other sources. Parents have a choice as to whether they want to be one of the sources. After a discussion of masculinity and femininity, he finished the session with a relaxation exercise, offered as a technique that parents can use when they realize they are getting angry. Among the concerns expressed by participants were the impact of marital tension on learning appropriate sexual roles, and the need to preserve some moral and religious values in spite of the push of the society against them.

The seventh and last session was conducted at the home of one of the participating couples. The session was conducted by the senior author of the manual. He had offered to conduct the session as a response to the instructor's concerns that some problems expressed by participants had not been satisfactorily dealt with during the sessions. She expressed relief at being spared the burden of conducting this last and most crucial session.

Following a brief introduction to the topic of problem-solving, he requested some specific problems that people wanted to work on. The problems offered were potty training, disruption of home routine with the arrival of the second parent, disobedience by a two year old, and a four year old who doesn't want to take a nap. The steps involved were described as: 1. Identification of the problem behavior including the circumstances surrounding it, what we do before and after the problem; 2. Generation of possible solutions without evaluating them; 3. Evaluation of alternatives, by examining their possible consequences, pros and cons; 4. Decide on a solution and implement it and stick to it. After examining each problem in turn, a consensus was reached as to a recommendation that seemed reasonable to the participants and specifically to the person who proposed the problem.

The informal atmosphere of the final session provided a good wrap-up for the course. The instructor invited people to stay in touch with her and said she would be open to a later reunion. There were some expressions of interest, but nothing concrete was agreed. At this time a number of children who had been cared for by babysitters hired by the participants for the occasion began to spill down, and the group slowly disintegrated. At the end she handed out some evaluation questionnaires that she asked be filled out and sent, anonymously, to the RCPCA.

B. Characteristics of The Participants

1. The Course Instructor

The instructor is the mother of two children, and lives with her husband in a single family home in one of River City's suburbs. Like most other participants in the course, she was born in a small town in a neighboring state. She was an only child, but her mother later divorced her father and then remarried. Her childhood was not particularly happy or stable and after a while she went to live with her father. She married at 17, right after high school and moved from state to state following her husband, who was in the military. The birth of her first child was a painful experience, both physically and emotionally. Her husband was away, so she went back to her mother, who had recently remarried again and was not prepared to deal with a pregnant daughter. The birth took place in a military hospital with a doctor she had never seen before her delivery. She felt that her mother did not understand her desire to hold her baby right after delivery and to avoid tranquilizers.

The episode made her more aware and interested in the birth experience, and the social and psychological needs of mothers. Coinciding with her move to River City in search of a better job for her husband, she enrolled in Lamaze classes and joined the River City Parent Child Association. The more positive experience of the birth of her son further motivated her to get involved in an organization that addressed a problem she felt strongly about. In her work with the RCPCA, she coordinated publicity for the Effective Parenting Course, so she decided to take it to get a better idea about it. After that, she became interested in teaching the course, and co-led another group with one of the regular instructors. The present course was her first experience being totally in charge.

Throughout the course, the two veteran instructors provided her with support and consultation. This took the form of a debriefing after the first session during which she was offered some ideas about other exercises to use later. She also felt that the senior author used the opportunity to see whether she was familiar with the material for the course. She feels that she is hired by RCPCA, and that the organization people need to be sure she can do the job. There was some concern with her style that struck them as too directive, too "I'm the teacher expert." But apparently they were satisfied that she could handle the class in the format of a lay leader and discussion facilitator rather than as an expert instructor. During the course, she asked the junior author to take full responsibility for a session devoted to sex education, an area that she did not feel comfortable with. In addition, the senior author took over the last and most crucial session on problem-solving.

2. Characteristics of Parents

a. Demographics

Eleven individuals participated in five or more sessions in the course The husband of one stay-at-home mother attended the first and last sessions, but his participation was extremely passive. A divorced mother attended only the first session and did not return. The instructor gave illness and baby-sitting problems as explanation for her absence. Of the eleven regular participants, only two were unavailable for interviewing. One was a stay-at-home mother, and the second a divorced working mother of a five-year-old boy. Neither had a significant participation in the discussions, nor presented a particularly unique situation. We strongly believe that these missing data in no way change the overall picture obtained for the group.

Following is the breakdown in terms of marital status and outside employment:

1. Two couples attended. Both wives stay home with the children, although one is normally a graduate student and is staying home with the children during the summer semester only.
2. Five stay-at-home mothers, all married.
3. Two divorced working mothers.

The participants came from all areas of the city, including at least two suburban developments outside city limits. The occupations of the working members of the families included clerical workers with large industries, CPAs, real estate sales people, a mortgage loan officer, a computer programmer, a state bureaucrat, and a college instructor. Only one of the women had what could be considered a career job, having been twelve years with the same company and having transferred to River City. None of the participants was making use of welfare assistance. They lived in middle income apartment complexes and single family homes in suburban areas.

Only one participant had three children. Three participants had one child and the rest had two. The most common combination was two children, one four and one two years old. The eldest child of one couple was 19 months old, below the recommended age for the course. The parents had been able to convince the RCPCA Course Coordinator that they would profit from the course because their girl was already exhibiting the behavior typical of the "terrible two's."

Only two participants, a couple, and been born, raised, educated, and employed in River City most of their lives. The rest were born elsewhere, as far away as California. Most had been raised and educated in different cities in the state of Texas. The group can be characterized as recently arrived to the city, having resided in the city or their current address for as little as three months to no longer than two years.

With only one exception, all the participants had from three to six years of life together before becoming parents.

b. Personal/Family Background

There were some characteristics of the participants' past lives and current family configuration that seemed important to understand their current concerns and their experience in the course.

Participant's Childhood: Their Parents As Models

In order to understand better the current concerns that participants in the EPC program expressed, researchers inquired about the nature of their childhood, the memories that they have of their own parents. That this is a critical point of reference for parents is attested by the fact that many spontaneous references were made by parents to their own childhood, often before any specific questions were posed about the subject.

Four parents assessed the job their own parents did in positive terms. One characterized her parent's style as liberal and relaxed, and she thinks they did a great job but were maybe a little bit too lenient. However, from what she saw of other parents who were strict, she feels leniency is better than strictness.

Another says that she thinks her parents were very permissive with her, and

> I don't really feel that there is anything too negative about it, other than maybe having had a bit too much responsibility.

Her father

> did not participate a whole lot, he was there, but wouldn't talk a lot, so we wouldn't always hear the way he felt. He has a real trouble with closeness. But he is there.

Another expressed admiration:

> I don't know how my mother did it. She raised both my sister and I to feel that we were very independent. I don't know how she did it except that she herself always expressed feminist feeling back twenty-six years ago. She herself had been divorced and raised two boys until she remarried my father. So she knew what it was like to work and raise two kids.

She feels that now she has more time, money and resources than her parents did, but as far as the learning and discipline, it has not changed.

> I feel we are doing just about the same things. I don't feel like we are any stricter or any less

> strict. I wasn't raised in a very strict household, but it wasn't permissive either. So it was very middle of the road.

One of the fathers participating feels that he is raising his children in many respects similar to his own upbringing.

> My family were raised to be independent and to appreciate the intellectual aspect of ourselves and to pursue our own goals, that each of us to be what we could be. My family is still basically democratic from my viewpoint.

The rest of the parents participating referred to their own childhood experiences in rather negative terms. One is consciously trying to establish with her son a much freer and open relationship than she had with her parents. She wants to be more accessible; wants him...

> to know more what I'm thinking and why I say certain things.

She remembers a lot of tension in her household, and is trying to avoid the same in her own home now.

Another, an only child, is consciously making an effort to change from the style of her mother. She says,

> My mother basically raised me under the guilt theory and just laid it on about that deep (gesture).

She explains the

> guilt theory as the ungrateful daughter routine, if you do this you hurt me, I worked so hard for you.

The unhappiness that she experienced was such that the only happy period from her childhood that she remembers was one summer that her mother was sick and she had to be sent away with relatives. Although her daughter is still too young for the guilt theory to have effect, she is trying to avoid doing that,

> and go more directly; if she does something I don't

> like, I either yell or spank her, you know, avoiding any kind of subtle stuff.

And her husband agrees with that. She thinks her daughter is

> still too young for anything other than the basic scare the hell out of them by screaming real loud when they do something or spank them. She is a little bit young for any kind of sophisticated discipline.

The four remaining parents were all spanked to various degrees as children. One says that her mother was a spanker and she took most of it.

Another remembers her childhood in terms that approach abuse and neglect. She says:

> My mother was very, very strict with me; could not do anything right no matter what I did. My mother used to holler a lot, and she used to spank me. And by spanking, I mean spanking hard, I don't mean a swat on the butt, and when my mother spanked me it was in anger.

In her parenting, she makes a conscious effort to reverse the trend, by giving her children a lot of attention and stimulation, putting them before order in the house, and promoting independence and curiosity.

One father felt that he was trying to convince himself that he was breaking the style of parenting his parents used with him. However, he says,

> When I look at what I do, I realize that I am not really breaking, that I'm using basically the same approach. Like spanking. I do a lot of spanking when I think that I need it, but sometimes I worry about whether or not what I do constitutes neglect or even child abuse. I don't think it is, but I worry about it.

Finally, another mother, when asked if she was raising her children the same way she was raised replied,

> Well, let's say that I didn't intend it that way. I found out I was getting very close to the way I was brought up at home and it wasn't really my intention. I had some changes that I wanted to make in the types of punishment. Mother was pretty liberal but father

> could go way off the handle. He just could not hold his temper at times. I think mother used to nag him, and if something didn't go her way she didn't let it up on him. And it usually ended up in a fight or argument and a physical battle sometimes. That type of confrontation. I don't think they came to a whole lot of agreements. I just don't think they had a close relationship and they didn't back each other up on a lot of things, especially agreeing on how you punish the kids and how you talk to them and that type of thing. I find that I am falling into the same way of talking to my children as I was talked to. And I didn't like it because everything was so pessimistic and very down. We didn't hear the good side and we weren't really encouraged or rewarded so much for our efforts.

Husband/Father Participation in Family Life

The two husbands of working mothers come closer to being model fathers. Both share equally in the housework, in arrangements that have been worked out with time. There are many areas of disagreement between spouses, but they are about the content and style of their participation in child care and socialization, not about the need or desirability for their involvement.

The husbands of stay-at-home mothers in all cases had a very minor participation in child care and socialization, even during the limited time they have to spend with their families. Their styles ranged from total non-participation in caring for babies in one case, to near neglect and abuse in another. Several mothers resented their husband's lack of involvement, but seemed resigned to the status quo. Only one husband of this group attended the course in an effort to improve his participation and as part of a general effort to improve his marital life which he saw as headed for divorce.

The former husband of one divorced woman had moved to a different city, so his involvement with his child was infrequent. The other ex-husband, although in the city, did not visit or interact in any way with his children.

In fact, the youngest child, now two years old, doesn't know who his father is. The older child was overheard by the babysitter telling a friend that "he was divorced from his father," a sad but accurate statement on the nature of their relationship.

Relatives and Others

Of all the parents attending the EPC course, only two families had a significant number of relatives within a one hundred mile radius. This reduced the possibility of contacts, and curtailed their role as sources of direct instruction or demonstration and as sources of support.

This distance from kin is aggravated in most cases by an absence of friends, particularly other mothers. The social and emotional isolation of most of these women is the single most dramatic characteristic of the group. They are separated from relatives, and only recently established in their current residences. They have no friends and their children often have no friends.

In addition to parents and in-laws, some participants in the EPC program mentioned other individuals and groups as exerting some influence over their parental behavior and feelings. The strongest reference was made by a couple who found a brother to be a negative reference group for them. The brother feels that they are too "permissive" in their childrearing. There have been repeated arguments over this, and the brothers have now severed relations. As he says, "you lose friends when you have children." More than the other parents in this course, this couple is concerned with reference group judgments. Not only do they feel they have been criticized by family members as being too permissive, but others such as a neighbor and landlady have also criticized them.

The wife said:

> I just didn't feel I was a good mother, because if I was, why was I feeling so bad, and why were these people dumping on me?

Only two other parents in the course expressed feelings about being judged by immediate or generalized others. One felt that she was being treated as a "second-class citizen" by mothers who worked outside of the home. She also wishes that others would be more tolerant of mothers and children in public places. She feels that

> ...people expect a lot of you and expect for you to have more control over your children's behavior.

She thinks that parents and non-parents alike should be more understanding of the difficulties of being a mother. Another felt that her husband's academic peers negatively judge the "stay-at-home mothers."

C. Parental Concerns

The Effective Parenting Course is directed to parents of children between the ages of two and six. These ages are recognized by experts and parents alike to be difficult years. The great majority of the books that serve as the basis for the EPC curriculum deal with the problems faced by these parents. During these years children enlarge significantly their potential for interaction with the world and especially with their parents. There lies the source of the most common conflicts between preschool age children and their parents.

1. Motivation to Participate in The Course

During the first session of the course, the participants were asked to introduce themselves and state their reasons for attending the course.

These presentations set the tone for the discussions that followed and provided a picture of the range of concerns that brought these parents to the course.

The most common theme that emerged from that first session was that a number of mothers expressed difficulties in controlling the behavior of their children. Children were described as: "wild," "uncontrollable," "sweet but at the same time loses control," "kicks and wreaks havoc," "already in the terrible two's," "sometimes sweet, but also has temper tantrums and is unmanageable."

Closely related to the problem of control was that of what techniques to use to accomplish that control. Three mothers and one father mentioned the use of spanking, but all were unhappy with the results and were looking for other alternatives. In this context, one participant revealed that she had been reported to the authorities for "bruising her child," and others expressed difficulties with self-control when using spanking.

Additional concerns voiced at that introductory meeting included sibling rivalry by one mother, potty training by two mothers, marital instability by another, and not spending enough time with the child because of work by another. Among the circumstances that parents mentioned as contributing to their problems were recent changes in residence and pregnancies (two mothers were pregnant with a third and fourth child, respectively).

During interviews with researchers, the participants elaborated on the reasons for their interest in the course. In general, they had been experiencing difficulties in their home life which directly related to bringing up their children. In some cases these problems were intimately related to marital difficulties that tended to complicate matters even more. Whatever the difficulties, they were acute enough to prompt them to participate in this course at this particular time. Participation involved an affirmative act of recognizing a problem and a willingness to incur the expenses associated with tuition, babysitting, and transportation to the school during six consecutive weekday evenings. Only two participants received advice from an authoritative source that can in part account for their participation; one was referred by a marriage counselor and the other by a welfare case worker assigned to oversee her treatment for a child abuse complaint.

Participants in this course expressed specific and clear expectations of what they wanted to get out of participation. Virtually all parents sought benefits for themselves as parents. They wanted "alternative ways to deal with" their children, something else "to use in place of" spanking, "parenting skills," "techniques." One couple who was experiencing marital conflict over childrearing particulars, sought a broader, perhaps more authoritative answer to their childrearing differences.

The wife said:

> I told them I was interested in learning a couple of techniques, mostly how do parents work out their framework.

A number of parents also expected to find some measure of support from the group. They wanted both reassurance from an authoritative figure, and reassurance from peers that one's problems and feelings are not unique, but rather shared by a lot of other normal parents. For example, one parent said:

> I just wanted somebody else to talk to, and you know, get a little bit different perspective.... It's, uh, you know, you are not the only one in the boat. There is a lot of other people there too...just some other people to talk to and share some ideas.

Another parent said:

> ...Since we don't have a lot of friends who have children, (we wanted) an opportunity to be in an environment and to examine what we could do to maximize our effectiveness as parents.

Another parent said:

> ...I had done some reading and I really resented that I was doing these readings and (my spouse) wasn't doing any. Because I felt that I wanted more support, to know if I was doing the right things. And you know, to have some conversations and feedback.

2. Special Themes

The concerns that parents in the Effective Parenting Course expressed both during the sessions and also during in-depth interviews not surprisingly reflect some of the issues associated with these changes in the behavior of their children, and are closely related to their motivation to participate. The children all appear to be normal. Only one mother expressed some concern that her child could be a bit slow. Parents who did not identify specific behaviors and traits in their children as the source of problems cited "changes in his behavior that I couldn't handle," the child's going through "an unfamiliar stage now, unlike the younger sibling whose problem behaviors were anticipated because he is into the terrible two's."

a. Control

When parents' description of their problems focuses on their relationship with their children, the dominant theme is that of control. The concept of control is articulated by parents in a number of different ways and does not always stand for the same set of behaviors. There are essentially two concerns with control that predominate in this group of parents: those parents who are concerned with controlling their children's behavior and those parents who are concerned with controlling their own behavior.

Among those parents who want to better control their children's behavior, temper tantrums and fits often appear as one manifestation of problems of control. One mother says that her eldest son's temper is a great concern and she feels that she doesn't have much control over him. Another describes her oldest as being: "...a monkey, and prone to temper tantrums, and quite a bit of a pain." In two cases, unsuccessful potty training was a source of concern and tension. One couple had decided to give up on training for the time being until their family life became more stable.

The parents who were most concerned with self-control expressed dissatisfaction with facets of their own behavior toward their children. These parental behaviors range in severity from one who feels she is doing a little too much "screaming," to a couple who feel they are resorting to spanking too often, to two mothers who fear that they are prone to what they call "child abuse," the bruising or injuring a child through excessive spanking.

A moderate concern with self-control is expressed by a mother whc wants to modify her behavior because:

> I was doing a lot of screaming and I didn't like it. I was looking for some alternative to deal with a four-year-old and a two-year-old.

Another woman was concerned that she had been "yelling and hollering" a great deal lately, and too often she would hit her children in anger. Her primary concern is that sometimes she feels she could "beat the heck out of them," and since that was the way she was treated as a child, she is afraid she will fall too easily into those old patterns. Another said:

> I was going overboard with my discipline and I didn't have anything else to use in place of it.

The difficulties with control, be it self-control or control of children's behavior, are encoded in a search for "alternative techniques," new or different ways to cope with the problems of control they are encountering. Irrespective of where the source of the problem is, the solution is seen as the acquisition of new or alternative childrearing techniques.

b. Dependence/Independence

A second concern that emerges from the interviews with the participants is expressed in the use of the terms dependence, independence and dependent behavior. Generally, the dependency of children and a "dependent" child are thought of by parents as negative states, while independence is an expressed positive goal for children. Yet, there is ambivalence. While they want their children to be independent, many of these mothers express more pleasure taking care of an infant who is dependent and "helpless," while they have greater and greater difficulty with their children as they grow older, become more self-assertive, and express an independent identity.

This ambiguity can be elucidated further by looking at the various contexts in which parents use the words "dependent," "dependency," "independent," and related concepts. One mother equates a sense of her own heavy responsibility with the "dependency" of her child. She says that the most difficult parts of being a mother are:

> ...the responsibilities as far as totally, total dependency, I mean to eat, to bathe, and to go to sleep, to do anything. Just the burden of the total dependency on you.

While she feels this dependency as a condition of her life as long as the child is small, another kind of dependency could and should be avoided. She suggests:

> I wish he wasn't so dependent on us as far as he doesn't ...go sit and play with his toys very long.

Having the "burden of total dependency," she clearly values respites from having to pay attention to, and play with, and entertain her child as well. This mother indicates that her son was a "great baby" until he reached fifteen months, and then he started to communicate, "I'm gonna do it my way." He became "demanding and strong-willed," and entered the "terrible two's." Several mothers indicated a preference for the less complicated dependency of infants over the ambiguity of a dependent child learning to be independent. Working out this transition is experienced as problematic.

c. The Burden of the Mother/Housewife Condition: Responsibility

Most negotiations to resolve the dependence/independence conflict take place in the home. In addition to the work involved in care and control of children, other household domestic tasks are a necessary part of family life. The styles and solutions attempted by the EPC mothers varied.

The stay-at-home mothers have the largest amount of time to devote to home and children. The stress associated with the total burden varied according to the availability of in-home and outside support.

Two of the six stay-at-home mothers found relief from the burden of total responsibility by using a limited form of preschool education for about three hours, three days of the week. They are emphatic to point to the "educational" nature of the arrangement (as opposed to mere custodial care) but also recognize the tremendous relief that it provides them. In addition, one belongs to two different babysitting clubs that provide care for special occasions during the day and evenings. Both of these women have relatively high standards for housework, and in both cases their husbands have assumed a very minor role in the care of the children, a fact that is resented by them.

A third mother, who has become a stay-at-home mother for the summer while not attending school full-time, has adjusted to the burden by allowing her standards of house care to lapse somewhat. Because of her previous status as a full-time working mother, she can rely on her husband's willingness to share a larger part of the burden of house and child care. Having achieved this participation, her reason for enrolling in the course at this time was to obtain some support from the group to negotiate with her husband the particular content and styles of his parenting participation. His greater participation necessitates a shared "framework" that will guide decisions about goals and practices in their family life.

The three remaining stay-at-home mothers experience the burden of parenthood in its most severe forms. One has three children; the two others have two children; and two of the three are in an advanced stage of pregnancy. Their home life before their husbands come back from work is devoid of pleasures. One found it easy to care for babies, who are "so innocent and helpless." She found pleasure in "taking care of them, meeting all their needs. They have a charm, they are real pretty." That wears off soon after they grow. Now they are hard to control. She hates housework, and their economic situation leaves little extra money for entertainment and special treats. Another mother finds her only pleasure in the love and acceptance that she feels from her children. She says:

> I enjoy being accepted by my children and having them think that I am somebody (nobody else does, she adds).

She likes playing with the children, and enjoys the freedom of being home, not having to get up at certain times and not having somebody to boss over her...other than her husband coming in and complaining about the house being a mess. She feels burdened by all the responsibilities, especially now that she is pregnant. She feels that her difficulties now are:

> ...Always being tired and never having enough time to take care of the house, take care of the cooking, keep my husband pleased, keep my parents pleased, my in-laws pleased....

She misses not being able to get in the car and go shopping and not being worn out by the time she gets to town.

Another mother finds some pleasure in watching her children grow and is looking forward to when they get older to be able to do things with them. For now, when their ages are twenty months and three months, she finds it difficult:

> ...To keep my cool when both of them are yelling or the oldest has done something for the eighty-fourth time that I have told her not to do.

Two children increase the burden to more than double.

> It goes along real smooth if one is asleep and the other one is awake, but when both of them want to be fed or both of them needing something, that leaves me about this much time to myself (gesture indicates virtually no time). I like to have time to myself and I just don't have it, just to be able to sit down and read a book or do some needle work or just sit and stare at the wall. I don't even have time to do that.

These last three women face the most severe crises in being parents. Maintaining their self-control holds the key to the difference between punishing and abusing their children. The three husbands share a relatively minor involvement in child care. One, although present at the birth of both children, didn't even want to hold them. The other helps some around the house and with the children when he can.

> He used to be very strict on table manners. He used to be very hard on them, and I would kind of get on him for being that way because I like my meal time to be pleasant instead of a correctional institution or whatever.

Another enforces rules around the house more than his wife. His wife says, "He lets it go until he gets mad and then he...comes in. We both either yell or spank."

Another condition that these three families share is a relatively unstable economic situation. Two of the families are barely making ends meet, and the third family operates under a feeling of economic scarcity necessitated by the recent acquisition of a new house that they can barely afford. Under these conditions, the use of external relief valves like eating out, using paid babysitters and entertainment are severely restricted.

The two working mothers attending the EPC program represent different problems. One had support from her husband, who was willing and able to share child care and housework. At one point he was unemployed and assumed the total burden of house and child care. Right now both have relatively flexible sales jobs, so that each will take some responsibility for the child whenever they have more time available. His disposition toward child care is so positive that she feels that if her husband had his way:

> He would right now quit his job and stay home for a while to take care of the child, because his job right now is totally depressing to him.

Although she wanted to stay home to take care of her son until he was four years old, it became necessary for her to seek employment. She still at times regrets not being home with him.

The other working mother is also a single mother, having been divorced since shortly after the birth of her second child. She has found child care in a family home care with a woman who has a small number of children under her care and who also has three teenage daughters that are often available to babysit evenings. Her home life, however, reflects the limitations that the absence of a spouse creates.

In spite of the relative availability of reliable babysitting from people she knows and trusts, she doesn't do much. She says:

> I'm not a big socialite or anything. I don't have a lot of company or go a lot of places or do a lot of things; I mostly just stay home.

3. Individual Case Examples

The examination of the interview data indicated some patterns of association between present conditions, the individual's childhood, and current availability of supports. These factors contribute to the total stress experienced by the participants. In order to illustrate how these factors contribute to the present concerns and thus to the potential impact of participation, four individual case examples were selected to represent the range of conditions, problems and concerns found in this group. The case examples tie together these conditions and provide a sense of the human qualities of the people involved.

The case examples will be presented in order of increasing total stress associated with their present condition. The first case, Jane, is a married, working mother who attended the course alone. The second case, Karen, is a married, stay-at-home mother of a boy and a girl. Her husband attended the first and last sessions but did not participate actively and was not interviewed. The third case, Cindy, is a divorced, working mother of two boys. The fourth case, Gail, is a married, stay-at-home mother of two and is seven months pregnant with a third child. Her husband did not attend the sessions.

a. A Working Mother

Jane, in her early twenties, is one of the youngest mothers attending the course. She is married to Jim and they have a two year old son, Johnny. They have been married four and a half years, and moved to the city about a year ago. Both work in real estate sales and leasing. Before, she worked as a waitress, a job that she dreaded. They have no relatives in the city, and although she declares a Protestant religious affiliation, they do not go to church regularly. Jane expected not to work until Johnny was four years old, but she had to choose between remaining in a city that she disliked or getting a job in her new place of residence. She still has some regrets about not being with her son all day like she wanted to.

Johnny is right now at the age in which he is mocking everything she does, and she describes him as being neat and taller than his age group. The contradictions that she experiences in his behavior are conveyed clearly when she says that, "He can be so sweet and can be such a monster." He is described as having been:

> ...The best baby, period. He never cried. He was a great baby until he was about fifteen months old. Then, things changed, and he started getting into more things and would start just...I'm going to do it my way.

Her daily routine begins when Johnny wakes up at about 6:30 A.M. and cries until she gets downstairs and feeds him.

> Then after that he'll play and you can lay down, he'll climb on top of you and won't leave you alone. When I come home at night and I walk up the door he'll scream until you get dinner ready and put it in his mouth.... Then he'll play after that. It used to be that you could ask him if he was ready to go night-night, and he would say yes and he would go upstairs and go to bed. He is not like that by any means now. It changed about two months ago. He just can't stand to go to bed now.

During the day Johnny is at a day care center, and either Jane or Jim will take him or pick him up. Jane is unhappy about not being with her son during the day, but sees the day care experience as providing an opportunity for Jim to take care of their son as an equal, sharing more of the burden, and also providing Johnny with contact with other children and adults and learning more about the world.

Jim's participation in child care has been facilitated by changes in their work patterns. When Jane first started working, Jim was unemployed, so he took full responsibility for child care. Now that he is employed, she feels that he would gladly quit his job and stay home and take care of Johnny.

Jane has goals for her son that she feels she can teach better than anybody else. She wants him to be "a nice person, just to care about other people, to be a good person. I don't care if he is a ditch digger or a President or whatever."

Jane believes Johnny gets more attention than she did as a child. Johnny not only is their first child, but also the first grandchild and they have a hard time controlling the amount of attention and treats, such as Easter candy, that he gets from the grandparents.

The only conflict that they have experienced with their parents came during the first weeks after coming home from the hospital. She had seen the confusion that other people had caused with several of her friends and did not want her mother-in-law to "come help her." She had to ask Jim to make sure that she did not come. After that their relationship has been good. She feels more accepted now, especially compared to when she lived with Jim for a year before getting married. Now she's not Jim's girl friend, but rather the daughter-in-law who gave them their first grandchild.

There are two areas of concern that Jane expressed in the interview. One involves a general concern with his development. She said:

> It is not anything real specific, just...I've always thought he's a little bit slow. Some people say, no, he's not, you know.... He's just so much taller that he looks like he's a three-year-old, but he's acting like a two-year-old, and it's always kind of bothered me. We had the

> problems with him when he was born, his head was growing larger and larger and larger. Took him to the doctors and he had turned alateral, one side is bigger than the other side which is OK for you and me, but for a child his age, it really wasn't. It wasn't bad, but they still don't know what it is. And...both my brothers have learning difficulties, and my mother read and talked to a lot of people, and it helped her to overcome it. I figure I could do...at least that much if not more. 'Cause he's always, he's been having a problem with looking like the big dumb kid as far as he's so much taller than his age group.

The other concern has to do with potty training, but she did not expect to get any specific techniques for that from the course. Rather, she expected to gain more knowledge about what children go through. This knowledge, she expects, will help her understand what Johnny is feeling at those times when he tries to tell her something and she doesn't understand, and she gets irritated because he keeps on and on and she can't figure it out.

Jane denies that there was anything specific that prompted her to take the course at this time. She spontaneously mentioned, however, her concerns with his development and potty training. She also mentioned that about two months before they started having problems with getting Johnny to bed at night.

Jane participated often in the discussions during the various sessions, but never put herself on the line holding a position openly discrepant with the rest of the group. She did not contribute new problems or topics of interest, but rather asked clarifying questions or added personal experiences that tended to support the position that seemed the concensus of the group or at least the majority opinion.

During the interview, Jane talked about her participation. She expressed frustration at not having spoken out more often. She said:

> There were a lot of times I wanted to say something and I never got it said, which would have led into a different discussion. The instructor seemed to not want to get carried away in discussions very much. Which I think it would have helped a lot of people a lot more if we had more time.

At the same time that Jane wanted more participation and more sides presented in the discussions, she would have liked to have a couple more straight classes, in order to get into a little more detail on some topics.

Only one participant, a man, provoked a specific reaction from Jane. She was offended by his extreme dominant style as a parent that deviated so much from her more "permissive" style. She felt that he needed the class the most. His high rate of participation and abrasive style made him highly visible and an easy target.

Jane finished her interview with a spirited pitch for parent education. She said:

> Parenting has got to be the most difficult job in the entire world and if you don't ever go to learn about it, you can't do a good job. And I know a lot of kids who are really messed up because of their parents. I think anyone that is a parent, no matter how good a parent they think they are, they should go to a parent discussion group.

Of all the participants, Jane presents the least amount of stress in her home life. She and her husband work outside the home, and that reduces the total amount of time that she has to feel responsible for her son. In addition, Jim has taken a good deal of responsibility for child care, providing the relief that is often absent in other families.

Armed with good memories of her own childhood, and thinking that her parents' middle of the road permissive style was correct, Jane sought more knowledge to help her understand what children go through in their development, their feelings and needs and their often puzzling behavior. She feels that she got that, and as a consequence, her own behavior has reduced the tension in their home life. She also picked up specific techniques that she has tried, and some worked and some haven't. She has a relaxed attitude towards potty training, having decided to postpone training for the time being. She was emphatic in stating that she was not concerned about discipline, since Johnny obeys them pretty well.

Jane came for insights on children, and she got them. She was also able to confirm that her middle of the road permissive style was the best, both by the general consensus of the group and by the negative reference provided by a participant she disliked. Although she felt that many times she wanted to speak, she lays as much of the blame for her lack of participation on herself as she does on the instructor and the lack of time available.

Jane represents a category of parent who face some objective difficulties in their daily dealing with their children, but who have a vague model (their own parents) to follow. Now, they look for some more specific knowledge and techniques to flesh out that framework. The content and values of parenting presented in the class were congruent with Jane's own intuitive feelings, and they provided a further elaboration, refinement and some new labels for concepts and techniques. In spite of the absence of Jim from the course, she reports that many concepts and techniques dealt with during the sessions found their way into their parental behavior, and she credits her participation in the course for it.

b. A Stay-At-Home Mother

Karen and Ken have been married eight years. They have a son, Kenny, who is almost four, and a daughter, Kim, who is two and a half years old. They have lived in the city only three months, having moved here from the hometown where they were raised, met as high school students, and later married. Their comfortable home is located outside city limits in a middle income area. Ken is an accounting professional, and Karen is a stay-home mother. They have no relatives in the city, but receive regular visits from their families back home. Their relocation in River City was something they both wanted to do because of the attractiveness of life there.

Karen held a variety of clerical jobs while helping her husband get his degree. That was during the three years of married life before they had children. Now, she stays home. She says:

> I feel like I should be home until they start school, and then I'm going back to school to finish up. But, unless it is an absolute necessity, I feel they need me at home and I need to be at home with them. I enjoy watching them grow. It gives me insight into what they are going through.

Karen describes her children as being very different from each other. Kenny is affectionate and loves to hug and kiss. He is open and able to make friends easily. He was a slow talker, but now he is making up for it. Kim, on the other hand, is shy and depends on her big brother a lot, and she is not a very affectionate child. Karen says that she nursed the girl without any problems, except that she never wanted to be rocked, just to be laid down and left alone. She learned how to talk sooner than her brother, a fact that she attributes to the model provided by her brother or maybe because girls are supposed to be more precocious.

Karen describes their home routine as a regular schedule of errands and play time. Kenny goes to a nursery school three days a week for three hours in the morning. Karen has been looking for a similar arrangement for Kim, but so far has been unable to find any. She rejects day care centers as an alternative and would rather attempt to organize a cooperative nursery her-

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self.

Their home life seems to be highly regulated by a series of rules for the children dealing with personal habits, snacks, and meals. She believes that is the way to create habits that will be self-sustaining later.

Consistent with the use of rules, her main goal for her children is for them to develop self-discipline. She also wants them to understand that they can achieve anything they set their minds on, especially the girl. Yet, she is concerned with making sure that she also learns that being a mother is just wonderful. She says:

> There is nothing in the world like being a mother, and I wouldn't give it up; I still want a career later on but I would never give up these years.

Karen has great admiration for her mother who was first divorced and had to raise two children before marrying her father. She sees herself following her mother's style of parenting, with rules and discipline. She feels she can take her children to her parents' home and not worry about a drastic change in standards. She considers herself middle of the road between permissiveness and strictness.

When asked about what she enjoys the most about being a mother, her response reflected both her condition of mother and that of stay-home mother. She said:

> What I enjoy the most is the freedom to do with my kids just anything on the spur of the moment. We don't have to plan a picnic, or we don't have to plan to go shopping because I'm working and not home. I love being able to shape someone else's life, and I love the fact that they are part of me and I can see me in them, and I can see my husband in them. That is really an ego trip. That is the most enjoyable part. And the love they give you.

The most difficult part of being a mother is being on call twenty-four hours a day. Here she decries the fact that her husband is not particularly helpful, especially when the children are small. She is quick to blame herself for it, thinking that she maybe didn't allow him to help by appearing so self-reliant.

The lack of participation of Ken in child care is part of an arrangement that was never really discussed but tacitly accepted by both of them. The house and children are her job, which she enjoys, and providing the income is his job. Still, she wishes he had the insight to see when she has a bad day and needs help. Her plans for the future include going back to school and getting a degree in accounting and setting up a business by themselves. She says:

> I'll still only be doing part-time work, only five or six hour days. So I'll still be mostly responsible for taking care of the children, and the house, car pooling and all that sort of stuff. Of course, when you work for (emphasis ours) your husband, it'll be a lot easier to sit for an hour. I have it all in the back of my mind. If I want to go shopping one day, I'm going to say, 'I'm not going to be in until....'

For the time being, though, not all is well. She has found herself doing a lot of screaming, and she didn't like that. She started to look for some alternative ways to deal with her children. She says:

> I feel like the threes were easy, now some people tell me that the threes are hard. I feel like Kenny was so much easier to discipline; he was more responsible for himself, more independent. And now that he is reaching four, is just like before he was two. And Kim was already into the terrible twos.

Karen felt that she wasn't handling them effectively. She had taken some child development courses in college and read several books like How to Parent and Dare to Discipline. She sought to become involved in a parent child organization similar to the one she had joined in her hometown. Through the River City Parent Child Association she found out about the course and both Ken and she enrolled in the class. She liked the fact that the manual was a compilation of ideas from other larger books that she didn't have time to read.

Her main concerns in coming to the course were her screaming too much and spanking at the spur of the moment. It is a dual concern with controlling her children's behavior and self-control.

The course provided her (Ken dropped out after the first session) with a better understanding of what the child's needs are, and specific techniques for discipline and control such as "quiet correction." She says:

> Quiet correction has worked a lot better for us, and it just helped me not to spank at the spur of the moment. I think I had it besides screaming. I still didn't spank a lot, but I felt that I was hauling off and giving a swat when I could have done something more, or explained more. With Kenny I don't want to give him all these threats to take away privileges, but I keep trying to tell him as he is screaming his little lungs out. I keep trying to say, 'Stop, calm down and talk to me, let's talk about this quietly,' and we are finally getting to where we are not doing as much screaming and hitting. He'll finally calm down and talk to me and let me talk to him.

Karen feels that communication is what she is attempting to do and is finally getting there in trying to explain the situation, explain her rules and why they have that rule. She also sees changes in herself, realizing that sometimes she was saying no just because it was easier. Now she says:

> Even if I had said no, if I think about it I'll go back and say, 'I am sorry. I shouldn't have said no. You were right. You can do it after all. I was wrong.'

Karen cannot recall anything that was said in the course with which she disagreed, or something that was missing. Her own contribution during the discussions was to offer examples and to relate the experiences that she had. The most significant role that she played as a member of the group was to provide reassurance to one couple that their problems were temporary and things would get better in their marital life and that the children would outgrow the behaviors that bothered them. In that sense, she was instrumental in fulfilling the second main function of the group, that of providing mutual support.

Karen is mildly critical of the instructor's abilities to control the participation of members of the class. She felt that people have the tendency to talk about their own problems too much, and that she should have made sure that everybody got to present their problems and concerns. She talked to her about it and she thinks that she really improved her handling of the group.

Karen summarizes what she got out of the course:

> Now my children are able to understand what my motives are, now that we have put down the rules a little bit better, and we are more consistent following them. I set the limits, they know they are there, and so I try to remember them before we go to the store or shopping and tell them what the rules are, and tell them how things are going to go. They really have heeded it most of the time. It's been real nice, we have really gotten along much better.

Karen has no reservations about recommending the course. She said:

> I would recommend it to anybody. If nothing more than to confirm what you are doing at home, even if you are doing everything it is to say, hey, you are doing OK after all. You are not a failure.

In her status as stay-home mother, Karen resembles superficially the kind of ideal traditional family that many feel is either doomed or threatened with extinction. Her husband works and earns the income, and she takes care of home and children and other domestic chores. The idyllic picture of this type of family appears in the beginning of the interview when Karen describes her home routines. Very soon, however, we see that there is a level of stress associated with the stay-home mother that can easily get out of control. This family has some pressure relief valves open. Their income is high enough that they can buy some services that increase the quality of their life. One of them is the nursery school for the children that takes some of the pressure off. Karen believes that the nursery school is really for the enrichment of her children, and would not consider "day care" as an alternative. That would be akin to reneging on her responsibility as a mother, almost as dumping the children. This belief is widespread among those who do not work, and yet they make use of limited forms of day care such as "mothers' day out" sponsored by many churches. What set Karen apart are her hopes for a career after she takes care of her duties as a mother of her preschool children. Still, that will be secondary to her continuing role as a mother. What is clearly seen in this type of arrangement is the almost total absence of the father from decision-making and specific duties for home life and childrearing and socialization. In spite of her hopes of raising her daughter to believe in her potential for achievement, her actual behavior presents a traditional sex role that almost automatically restricts women to motherhood as the only acceptable choice.

Karen and Ken are attempting to maintain the illusion that her full-time domestic and motherhood duty is not only desirable, but also healthy. In that quest, they have used the course and its middle of the road ideology to oil the machine, to smooth some of the rough edges that make home life stressful. They have in their favor positive models from their childhood and an economic position that will permit them that lifestyle. The knowledge and techniques, especially dealing with discipline and rules, will help them control the behavior of their children. At the same time, Karen's new insights into children's needs and the use of communication will help her with self-control.

c. A Single (Divorced) Working Mother

Cindy is a thirty-five year old divorced mother of two boys ages four and two. She works as a programmer and has been with the same company for twelve years, starting right after graduation from college. She and her husband transferred to River City three years ago, and soon after, their marital differences resulted in a divorce right after the birth of the younger son.

Cindy lives in a middle income area of single family homes in a development close to her work place. She has no relatives in the city, and reports annual visits from or to her hometown in another state. She has few friends and a limited social life. Of all the participants in the course, Cindy is the only one that has a career that she wants to maintain and plans to transfer back to her home state soon.

Cindy reports having read magazines and some books on childrearing and being interested in pursuing the matter further when she saw a TV announcement for the course. It happened at a time when she could count on having babysitting available for the six weeks, so she enrolled. Her main concerns at the time, expressed both in the sessions and in the interview, were with controlling Carter, her older son. She says:

> I was really concerned more with Carter's behavior than Charlie's, and with Carter's influence over him. I wanted to control him some way other than spanking him. I don't feel like I have a lot of control over him. Also, his potty-training and temper tantrums.

Cindy's home life with the children is a constant tug of war. Throughout the session, Cindy kept bringing back her problems with Carter, first as just a matter of getting him potty-trained at home, because at the home where he is cared for during the day he already does fine. As the sessions progressed and their instructor and the other participants offered a variety of suggestions and techniques that she had already tried unsuccessfully, it became clear that the potty training was only one aspect of the difficult relationship between Carter and his mother. In more than one occasion, Cindy expressed her frustration by saying, "I think he hates me." During the interview she described the discipline methods that she used.

> The only discipline that I use really is spanking. Well, Charlie doesn't respond to anything, but Carter will respond to the threat of the belt, that I'll get the belt. He will immediately stop. He didn't when he was two either. But now with the belt, if I go and threaten them with the belt and walk over and get the belt, that takes enough time that I'm not as angry as if I hit them with my hand. And I can just give them one swat and it doesn't even have to hardly hurt. But Carter--it's psychological--he gets furious with the idea that I hit him with the belt irregardless of pain. Charlie doesn't. He is more responsive to making him stand in the corner; he doesn't want to do that, he can't be still.

Cindy realizes the difficulty of setting up and enforcing too many rules, so she has tried to restrict them to the essential. One area of major concern to Cindy is Carter's temper, and she wants to prevent Charlie from copying him. So when he gets mad, insults her or throws things, he has to go to his room, and in order to come out he has to apologize.

Her own upbringing was not a very happy one. She was the youngest of four girls and her parents were strict. After seeing how her sisters were denied permission to go places or do things, she didn't even try. Her mother did all the discipline in the family, and the only form she used was spanking. She says:

> She never beat us or anything, but it was always a spanking, and I was the one that got spanked all the time because I always did things. Until I was eight or nine I got spanked

> every day and it never sunk in. I was real sensitive, I cried a lot and my feelings got hurt, but I think that is why it's natural for me to spank. My mother never sent us to our room, she never took away privileges. By the time I got to be a teenager, I never challenged her; I would just pester her until she would say go and I don't care if you never come back. And that would hurt my feelings, but I would always go.

When asked about the pleasures of being a parent, Cindy responded:

> I think when Carter and Charlie show affection, when they come up and hug me. Or if Carter says, 'Mama, I like you," that always makes me feel good. It also makes me feel good when they are little and learn to do things and accomplish something.

In recalling a specific incident in which Carter learned something, Cindy remembered her own inability to watch and wait for him to put together a relatively hard puzzle that she gave him. She said it was driving her crazy, so she left the room.

When asked about the difficulties involved in being a parent, Cindy chose the discipline, trying to get the children to respect and mind her without frustrating her to death. She believes it is tied to age, and with Charlie she figures that he will outgrow it since Carter went through this and got over it. The stages that Carter is going through she doesn't recognize. She says:

> I think it is his personality, the way he is going to be for the rest of his life, so I just get terribly frustrated. I think I have to correct it today, this very day. So with Charlie I am much more relaxed because I don't worry about it and it is not frustrating as it is with Carter.

The overall quality of Cindy's home life leaves much to be desired. She finds no time to do household maintenance tasks like painting and wallpapering, and it is only late at night that she has some time for herself. She reports virtually no social life, very few friends, some with children, but no real support network.

The limited outlets for conversation and exchange of experiences with other parents probably explain the quantity and intensity of her participation as much as does the severity and tension built into her relationship with her children. During the session, over and over again, Cindy would bring up her problems with Carter in the form of his failure to potty train. Part of her frustration came from the fact that at the home where he is cared for during the day with a few other children Carter does fine. But when he comes home, he cannot control himself and often will soil not only his clothes but also the bathroom. There are hints of jealousy with the babysitter who seems to be able to control him so well.

Cindy's evaluation of the course was phrased in general terms by necessity. Her concrete concerns with potty training were discussed in every session and advice given, but it always seemed like she had already tried it without success. What the course accomplished for her was:

> To make you more aware that children are children, and that the problem that you are having with your child or the behavior your child is showing doesn't make him weird, you know, all children do this. And it is just a matter as to what type of things you can use to regain control of the situation, not to let them control you. One of the real important things that I've tried to do is to treat him like a person, and not just as a possession of mine that I can do what I want to, and respect them and expect them to respect me. And especially when I'm in a bad mood, because I'm not tolerating anything they did. It is hard to retrain myself, and the only way that I can train them to control themselves is for me to do it. I just get really angry and irritated when I'm busy doing something and they are bugging me, they are wanting my attention and I can't give it to them....

The hardship of the single parent life is painfully apparent to Cindy.

> I think that with a single parent is, you know, I'm the only one they have. So really I probably would need to

> give them more time as when there are two parents, each giving some time. You can always tell them to go talk to the other one or the other parent can distract them or something. It is kind of hard and they are real impatient about me fixing supper.

The impact that the weekly sessions had on Cindy cannot be easily evaluated. In spite of the inability of the instructor or the group to come up with a viable solution to the concrete problem of potty training, Cindy was satisfied. She says:

> I've really enjoyed the class. I decided that it would be good for me to have this class or a class similar to this where you just had a discussion or something twice a week for six years to learn this. Because I find myself Thursday and Friday and Saturday being real conscious and then tending to forget about it until next Wednesday. So I'm not sure how soon it's going to wear off. I figure I will always remember these things and they will come back, but I don't know if I'm going to remember them on a day-to-day basis. You have to really make a conscious effort. I was thinking of making a chart or posting something in the kitchen where I could see it. Maybe just the list of tools (for discipline) or children's needs. Something that I could see a couple of times a day just to remind me to stop and think about it.

In the case of Cindy it is particularly difficult to evaluate the impact of her participation. Throughout the sessions, some participants were getting frustrated with the group's inability to tackle and "solve" Cindy's problem. It was clear to the instructor, however, that there could be something deeper in the relationship to explain the potty training failure and the constant antagonism between Carter and his mother. As if there had been an unwritten rule, the circumstances surrounding her divorce were never brought out during the session. The instructor suggested privately to her individual counseling to deal with these interpersonal problems, but whether or not that advice was followed is not known.

The sessions provided Cindy with an array of discipline tools other than spanking, and it gave her a new understanding of her children's needs. More importantly, it served as an escape valve where she could at least tell of her problems to other sympathetic mothers and get a measure of support. The potential dangers built into this effect are twofold. One, the nature of the group is temporary, so after the six weeks of this emotional release she was back to her isolation and frustration. Second, it could have given Cindy a false sense of normalcy to her predicament. At one point in the interview she said that what the program had accomplished for her was to make her more aware of the children and that the problem or the behavior that the child is showing doesn't make him weird, that all children do that. That a four-year-old child cannot control defecation, or that he uses feces in an aggressive manner to soil the bathroom and his clothes, is not necessarily best handled by shrugging the problem off as "normal." In other words, the problem with his behavior and the problem with their relationship most likely will not be solved with time alone. If the Effective Parenting Course is not followed by individualized attention, it will simply provide a temporary source of emotional support and a false sense of normalcy to a situation that requires attention.

Cindy's case provides a good example of the difficulties faced by single mothers. In her case, single motherhood is compounded by a low self-concept and a lack of social supports. Far removed from her sisters, deserted by her husband, unable to make friends, Cindy found a temporary haven in the group. Whether or not she can use the alternative tools that she learned is doubtful. She said clearly that she needed the group twice a week for the next six years to improve her parenting.

What she really needs, as much or more than the knowledge and techniques offered in the course, is a social network of supportive individuals and families. In addition, individual counseling would certainly be helpful. She is taking at least one step to solve her social isolation. She is waiting for her younger child to be a few months older to request a transfer to her hometown in the Midwest.

d. A Stay-At-Home Mother

Gail is a thirty year old mother of two, Gregg, four, and Gloria, two. She is pregnant with another baby expected in about two months. She has been married to George for eight years. Both were born and raised and went to school in small towns near River City. George is a computer programmer and works for a state bureaucracy. They live outside city limits in a beautiful home overlooking the countryside. Gail had several jobs before her first pregnancy, none of which she enjoyed particularly. She has not worked after the arrival of her children, although George would like her to work to help with the bills. Her mother never worked and she feels strongly that the mother should be at home with her children, and she always expected that she would. She said:

> I just hate the thought of having to go to work. Well, I didn't like my job anyway, and I think that it has something to do with it. If you have a job you really love, it probably makes a difference. But I can't imagine just leaving the kids as little as they are with someone I don't know, not being part of their everyday life.

Gail describes her children as being very different. Gregg is nervous and high-strung, a fact that she attributes to her own nervousness. She felt she was really unprepared to have a baby. She did not take a Lamaze class or have any preparation for her delivery. Her husband was also nervous. The infant had colic and was not breastfeeding well. She describes the birth:

> I had a very difficult labor--it was induced and that means the pains came real fast. It was hard on him as well as on me. I was in hell, so I know it was painful for him, and they just took him away, they didn't let me hold him or look at him. They gave me a sleeping pill and then twelve hours later I was asking for him and they finally handed him--here is your baby, you know. He slept the whole day when I got him. That night I had him and he was up all night crying, and I didn't know what to do for him, and the nurses were busy. I didn't know how to breastfeed him, change a diaper, I didn't know how to do anything. I was in bad shape; it was a horrible situation.

Compared with that experience, the birth of her daughter was a much more positive experience. In the second birth she had the smallest dose of Demerol possible, and the baby was alert. The nurses commented how alert she was all day, and then she slept at night. That was a good situation, she says. Also she got to see and hold her baby about an hour and a half later, compared with the twelve hours that it took to get Gregg.

Gloria is described as being calmer and attached to her--"her Mama's baby." She is learning fast. She knows more words than he did at that age. Gail doesn't see any differences in their physical development, only in language. They have not had much contact with other children, a fact that she attributes to the places where they have lived and her own failure to go door to door to seek out company. Now that they live out in the country, their social isolation is even greater.

Gail's home life revolves around her children. She lets them "help" with many chores although more often than not they make it harder. She remembers her own mother never allowing her to help and wants to avoid that frustration she felt then. She also has allocated some special space in the house for the children to play and have their own environment.

When asked about what she expected her children to learn from her, Gail first mentioned "telling the truth," followed by a string of more material concerns, a theme that appears often in the interview. These include respecting property, not tearing things up, taking care of their own things, how to manage money, and how not to waste. She traces that to her mother who was always strong on those values.

Another concern brought up in relation to values was nutrition. Gail feels strongly about the kind and quality of the food her children eat, and would worry about that if they went to a day care center. Unfortunately, this is a value that her husband does not share, so her efforts during the day to eat healthy snacks, fruits and milk are spoiled every night when her husband comes home with sweets.

Gail's insistence on staying home with her children, even against the wishes of her husband, can be traced to her experiences as a child. She says:

> I was an only child and you'd think I'd gotten a lot of attention, but I don't think I did, not when it was important. When I was little my mother would sit me in a playpen. I just don't feel like I was held as a baby and loved as a baby like I should have been. My mother--her garden was more important to her and she stuck me in the playpen, and I stayed in there by myself. I don't think I had the stimulation that young children are supposed to have, being able to get out and move and do things. I feel that I am a passive person in a lot of ways, and I think it has something to do with being stuck in that playpen and not being able to get out.

In order to change that, Gail feels she gives them a lot of attention, and as a result, the house is often a wreck. She regrets that at one point she was giving their new house more attention, and she realizes that the children are more important than the house or anything. In addition to attention, Gail is also changing another trait that characterized her mother. She felt her mother was too strict with her, not allowing her to do this or that, because she seldom did it right. She is trying to instill in her children the fact that they can do anything as long as it is not dangerous. She says she encourages them to be independent and to try new things.

Throughout the interview, Gail kept comparing her parenting style with that of her mother, point out similarities and differences. The last area of concern, the one that prompted Gail to seek help through the course at this time is discipline. Here she recollects the treatment that she got and ties it with her own current practices:

> I think in some ways I'm a lot like my mother, but in others I am not. My mother used to holler a lot, and she spanked me. And by spanking, I mean spanking hard, I don't mean a swat on the butt. And when my mother spanked me it was in anger, and it is a hard thing. I can see about all this child abuse business; if you have been an abused child, you tend to abuse your children. I find myself yelling just because I'm mad, things like that, and that is one reason why I wanted to take the course, to learn how not to do that.

Gail goes on to relate a specific incident the night before in which she spanked her little girl, Gloria, in anger. She is aware that it is wrong and where she learned to do that. She was very worn out and tired and shouldn't have been doing all the work she was doing. The little girl did something, and Gail took it out on her.

Her state of pregnancy complicates their home life and puts additional stress on their relationships. She is supposed to take at least two hours rest every day but finds it hard to get the time. She says:

> One of the difficulties now being a mother is always being tired and that is really because I am pregnant. I really can't say I would always be tired if I wasn't pregnant. Always being tired and never having enough time to take care of the children, take care of the house, take care of the cooking, keep my husband pleased, my in-laws pleased. That is the most difficult thing for me.

There are few rewards for Gail. She says:

> What I enjoy most about being a mother is the love of my children, the way my children feel about me. I really enjoy that. Being accepted by my children and having them think that I am somebody (laughs); nobody else does! Two human beings that think I'm really something, even though sometimes they tell me they don't like me (laughs).

Another reward associated with her stay-home status is:

> ...The freedom of just being home, not having to get up at a certain time and not having somebody boss over me... other than my husband coming in and complaining about the house being a mess.

George's participation in child care is very limited. She says:

> He has probably changed two or three diapers since we had the kids. I'm not sure it's been that many. He doesn't like the kids when they are young. I wish I could change this because he has been present at both births. He didn't even want to hold her, though, after she was born. It was so important for me to hold her, and he could have pretty soon, but it wasn't important to him. He didn't start dealing with Gregg until Gloria came, and he was two years and three months. And then he just took over Gregg and he wouldn't have anything to do with Gloria; she was my baby.

When Gregg was smaller, Gail sometimes would leave him with his father. Coming back, she would find the baby screaming or crying or she could tell that he cried himself to sleep. She thinks George just didn't have the patience with him, he would get angry at him, didn't realize that he was a tiny baby that couldn't help it that he was crying. It got to the point that she wouldn't leave him alone. She was afraid that he might do something and hurt the baby because he has a temper. Gail thinks that it has a lot to do with her father-in-law:

> George's attitude has a lot to do with his daddy. His daddy doesn't do anything around the house, he has to be waited on hand and foot, never picks up his clothes, never does anything, and I feel he did the same thing with the kids--it was all his mother's responsibility. So I think it carries over from that.

After the arrival of Gloria, George started to take a greater responsibility to care for Gregg, and Gail expects that it will happen again with the arrival of the new baby, that he will relieve her of some of the responsibilities. At least that is her understanding.

Gail carried her concerns with discipline and self-control to the discussions during the sessions. Her position during the interactions was that although she used spanking, she realized that it was bad. She wanted alternatives to control the behavior of her children. At the same time, she was aware that her problem was more a matter of self-control than controlling the children. She says:

> I like to think of myself as being the calm, collected, in control mother. I would rather look at myself in that way, than see myself screaming and hollering, and I was finding myself doing it more and more at night.

She later adds:

> I didn't want it to get any worse, like I would hit them too in anger. I feel like I could be more like my mother and really spank. That is in me. I feel it. When they do something and I'm real tired and I'm frustrated, I feel like I could--I just could beat the heck out of them, like I was spanked. And I don't want to do that.

During these extremely tense times, the attitudes and behavior of George do not provide much relief. When we asked Gail how her husband felt about her participation in the course, she replied:

> My husband doesn't go for any of these things (laughs). For George, anything that has any kind of sound of sociology, psychology, anything, he thinks it is for the cuckoobells and he doesn't want to have a thing to do with it. And I asked him if he wanted to come. I said, 'I'm going, I'd like for you to go.' No, he didn't want to. Fine. I'm not going to force him. And he has really not even liked for me to go. Every Wednesday night he says, 'Oh, you're wasting that gasoline going in...you haven't gotten anything out of the course.' He is still saying that. But I know it's not true.

Gail asked George to read the book, but she doesn't think he will. She says:

> George thinks that you don't need help with things like this. And I feel like you've gotta have some help (laughs). To me, it's not like going to a psychiatrist and getting help. I mean, it's just other parents, being with someone else. To me, it's a learning experience, like taking a course in college or something. It's a learning experience which I think every parent needs.

In evaluating her experience in the course, Gail mentioned the expectations she had. First, she expected men to participate, based on the TV spot that she saw. Second, she expected it to be a lecture format and not so much discussion. She found that the course was mainly discussion, talking out different people's problems and trying to come to some type of solution. She expected it to be like the classes where she could just sit and never open her mouth, like everybody else. If the lecturer was good, great; if not, too bad. Instead, she found herself talking a lot, more than she ever had anywhere. She felt that it was a nice, easy atmosphere, where she could say something if she felt strongly about it.

When asked about specific topics discussed, Gail found that the topic of children's needs made her think. She says:

> I really hadn't thought much that when my children are doing something it is because they have a need. I really haven't thought about that before. I just thought this kid is driving me crazy, but I didn't think, well, there is a reason. So I think that was pretty good.

Gail was pleased to find confirmation and support for her idea that children need a special area other than their rooms where they can play and have toys. Their house was built with a special lighted area that later will become a breakfast nook, but that for now the children can call their own.

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Gail also recalled the discussion about rules and the importance of having few rules that parents are willing to enforce. She also found it useful to view some behavior as just an attempt to test the rule, to determine the limits of acceptable behavior.

Gail understands that change will take time. She says:

> I'm not hollering as much, but I still holler some. I think this is just a beginning step. I don't think that it's gonna be any kind of miracle work. It is going to be a slow process, and I will need to pick up that book and a lot of other books and read them and think about them and work things out. I have tried to think more about their needs, what is it that they want, and I try to watch the way I talk to them.

Gail has noticed that lately Gloria will throw a temper tantrum, an absolute fit, falling on the floor, screaming, crying, kicking, scratching, hitting. She carries her to her room and tells her to stay there until she has calmed down. After fifteen minutes they can usually talk and communicate.

Gail would recommend this type of course to other parents:

> To just gather with some other parents would be nice, to get together with other people that have problems, so that you are not the only one. It feels good to hear someone else talk about the problems that they have. And you think, well, you are not that bad after all, you know. Your problems are not that bad.

It is not surprising to know that Gail doesn't have anybody that she can talk to or get together with; she doesn't have a close friend or somebody. She talks to her husband a lot, but he is not really helping her deal with the stress. Because of the expenses associated with the house, they have never had a babysitter that can be called regularly. She would have liked to have a play group for the children, but their isolation, both physical and social, has forced her to spend all the time locked up in her beautiful house with the children, house care, cooking, and all the other pressures from relatives that she cannot avoid, on top of the physical discomfort associated with her advanced pregnancy.

Gail and her family are a more severe case of stress associated with stay-home motherhood. The lack of social contacts and support, coupled with a very aloof and uncooperative husband, make her plight special. To complicate matters, she is in an advanced stage of pregnancy which makes the future look dim. During her attendance at the course, Gail had to surmount the cynical attitudes and active opposition from her husband towards this attempt for self-help. She went looking for knowledge that would be imparted by an impersonal lecturer. Instead, she found herself in a group of people who spent a great deal of time talking about their problems with their children. Although she was somewhat critical of the skills of the instructor to manage the flow of the discussion, Gail ended up talking more than she thought she would, and feeling good about the acceptance and the atmosphere developed in the group. In her isolation, she had no way of comparing the stress that she experienced with other mothers of young children, and she found much of that in the group. Gail's case is representative of a group of three stay-home mothers who share very similar conditions. Two of three are pregnant with their third or fourth child, and all three have a mostly negative memory of their childhood, having been severely beaten or subjected to extreme guilt feelings. In all three cases, the husbands do not participate very actively in child care. All three families are experiencing economic hardships, in two cases associated with plain limited income, and in Gail's case, as a result of putting all their resources into an expensive home, leaving nothing to buy the services that could make her load as a mother lighter. Only one of the three husbands attended the course, and in his case, marital difficulties seemed to be the additional motivation to seek outside help.

Locked up in her gilded cage, Gail saw these two months prior to the birth of the third baby as her last chance to get some help. She expected the course to consist of self-help learned from a lecturer. Instead, she explored new ideas in interaction with a group of similarly troubled mothers, forcing her to open up and give some of herself, but getting in return the feeling of not being alone in her plight. She got the sense that she was not really that different from other people after all. She has a realistic assessment of how difficult and long it will be to change those behaviors that trouble her. What she learned in the course will help her understand her children's behavior better and change her own approach. As for her husband, there is little hope that he will change, so Gail has taken it upon herself to maintain and improve the quality of their home life.

D. Program Impact

In Chapter II we included a narrative account of the development of our conceptual framework. We started by asking some general questions about parent education programs, such as what was happening to parents that made them seek these programs, and what happened in the programs that satisfied them. At this point we are in a position to begin to answer those questions in reference to the Effective Parenting Course. First we will present a summary of the evaluative comments made by participants about the content and format of the course and about the instructor. Then, we will explore the articulation between the social and personal condition of these parents and the program, what we have defined as its impact.

1. Evaluative Comments About the EPC

The participants' evaluation of the seven sessions of the EPC were explored during the individual interviews, scheduled just before the end of the series of sessions. The comments about the course and the instructor were closely related to their expectations about the course and their preferred style of learning. The comments are highly subjective and often contradict and balance those of another participant.

The most enthusiastic response to the class content came from the three participants with the lowest educational attainment. They expressed new insights about child behavior using the concept of need. Other mothers recalled specific concepts that were important to them because they confirmed a belief that they held or a practice that they were already implementing. One mentioned the importance of providing a special environment in the home where children can explore and play with relative freedom.

One mother said she got from the course some knowledge to help her understand what children go through and what they are feeling. Another got from the course some more parenting skills and some insights to help her organize information she had obtained from parenting books she had read.

Several participants mentioned various specific concepts and segments of the sessions as valuable. These include, in addition to children's needs, tools for discipline, quiet correction, use of explanations and communication, rules, being consistent, and child-proofing the home and setting up a special place for the children. Also mentioned was the concept of testing (as in children testing a rule), a particularly novel and useful interpretation of some children's behaviors.

The most negative comments came from participants who did not find their expectations fulfilled. One felt he had not learned any specific technique, just some general notions, and that too much time had been spent on what he termed "psychotherapy," meaning discussions among members in a mutually supportive fashion. He expected a classroom atmosphere, where he could take notes and learn from a highly trained and authoritative source some specific techniques.

The two other participants who felt most disappointed about the content felt that they had not really learned anything new, but just some new labels for what they already knew. This couple, one of only two couples participating, mentioned as positive elements selected aspects of the content that fit into their own personal agendas; both sought in the group outside support to bolster their positions in their conflict as mother and father. She liked the idea that there should be a few important rules and he liked the acceptance of spanking as one occasional resource (as opposed to an outright ban to it as a discipline tool). Both considered themselves more educated than the rest of the group and gave the impression of placing high value in intellectual pursuits. In consequence, they judged the overall course as being below their standards, and had expected a more theoretical or higher level treatment of the topics, more in line with a college type course. Their actual behavior during the sessions, however, did not show any reluctance to participate in the format chosen or at the level that the course was conducted.

We asked the instructor after four sessions had elapsed about the patterns of interaction that had developed. She said that her intention had been to provide more content, so that participants would not go off on a tangent. She wanted to put more content at the beginning of the course and then let people talk about that relating it to their own situations. It really did not turn out that way, she acknowledged.

The opinions of the participants about the interactions during the sessions varied substantially. There was agreement that a good deal of interaction and participation took place. Whether this was seen as positive or negative reflected the individual expectations and needs of each participant. One mother did not like the time that some people took delving into their own problems, such as toilet training or marital differences, because those were not her concerns. Overall, however, she found the contributions of the other participants important.

At least three participants spontaneously lamented the fact that too much time was spent dealing with the specific problems of two or three participants, in effect decreasing the chances of participation for the other people. It is ironic, however, that one of those who complained about others taking too much time was the mother who brought the single most discussed case, and who herself participated the most.

With few exceptions, the participants liked the opportunity to exchange views, and were often surprised that they were sharing for the first time some feelings and concerns they had. The criticisms can be attributed to the failure of the course instructor to control the interactions to allow more people to participate, and the relative short time available for the course. It is clear that the instructor's original goal of combining expository lectures of topics with class participation was realized only partially.

The evaluative comments about the instructor varied considerably, and in many cases the opinions were divided. Several participants coincided in their assessment of the discussion aspect of the course as an important and valuable part, but one that could have been conducted better. Some blamed her inexperience for her difficulty in controlling topics and participants.

On the positive side, one mother recognized her ability to draw people into participating in the discussions. Also recognized was her honesty and openness to discuss her own development as a mother.

2. Program Impact

The parents who came and enrolled in the Effective Parenting Course were recent arrivals to the city, did not have relatives around, and for the most part had few friends, if any, who were also parents. They were living in a state of social and emotional isolation. Their children are normal, most between the ages of two and four, and are undergoing changes in their behavior that their parents find puzzling and often annoying. In the absence of friends or kin who could provide advice or at least confirmation that their predicament is normal, these parents have done some reading seeking knowledge and techniques to deal with their children. Still, they are not satisfied and expect that a class, with an authoritative instructor, will be a better way to get the knowledge they seek. Some also expect to be able to interact with other parents and compare experiences.

Some of the participants carry positive memories of their own childhood and are trying to continue the models that their parents used. Yet, some details and specific techniques are missing, and they expect the course to supply them. Another group of parents have negative memories of their upbringing and are even more in need to fill in the gaps and to develop a model that will avoid the negative experiences they had. All the participants hold a middle of the road ideology of childrearing, somewhere between strict controls and permissiveness. They want their children to grow up to be independent and responsible, achievement-oriented, good people. And yet, right now, many find themselves unable to control them without resorting to verbal or physical violence. They feel that this is not right, but they don't know what to do. Thus, they come and meet with other parents who share some of those same concerns, under the leadership of an instructor who is also a mother, just like them. Although not as authoritative as many would have liked, her performance succeeds in teaching some basic concepts and in illustrating an array of alternative techniques that parents can use to control themselves and manage the behavior of their children. In the process, many parents find emotional support and confirmation that their predicament is not unique and in some cases that they are in not such bad shape after all. The group, self-selected, is heterogeneous in composition. All the participants are Anglo and middle class, but they include two fathers, two single mothers, and one married working mother. The other half of the women present are stay-at-home mothers.

The most severe stress is found among those mothers who have two or more children and are home alone all day. In three cases their self-control is all that prevents them from being abusive mothers. One has already been reported to welfare officials, and her attendance at the course is part of her efforts to find a way out. In all cases the husbands have failed to provide necessary support and relief. Only one of those fathers attended the course, and in his case it was as part of a more general effort to hold the family together, since he was also experiencing severe marital difficulties.

Single working mothers experience a great deal of stress. In the one case examined here, stress is complicated by a very negative relationship with

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her older child and a poor self-concept that increases her isolation, not only as a mother, but also as a woman.

It may be surprising to some to find that in those couples where both husband and wife work outside the home, the problems are less severe. They have achieved a sharing arrangement, and their presence in the course was more to iron out style and content differences and to enrich a home life that is already considerably better than that of the other parents.

We can summarize the structural and situational factors that contribute to the total stress experienced by the participants in this course. These factors are presented also in order from the most prevalent to the least common in the group studied. First, social and emotional isolation. Second, lack of or limited participation of the husband/father because of unwillingness or absence. Third, a negative memory of their own childhood, functioning as a negative reference. Fourth, number of children. Fifth, relative economic scarcity, associated with limited educational and occupational skills. Sixth, marital problems. The more of these factors or situations present, the greater was the stress in the family life of these mothers.

The curriculum for the course is broad and represents a mainstream, eclectic position based on a pragmatic view of "what has been shown to work with parents." The concepts advanced blend a dash of behaviorism, a bit of Addlerian psychology with a humanistic touch. Parents are invited to contribute to this pot-luck supper, a cafeteria style service where each takes what looks appetizing. There is little in the course that could offend anyone, no radical views or positions that could clash with deep-rooted religious beliefs or values that are part of middle-class American culture. On a superficial level, both stay-at-home mothers and working mothers could agree on all the basic principles, and the only difference between them would be the amount of time that they have chosen to spend with their children.

This classroom format of the course is combined with some of the advantages of small group dynamics. The interpersonal exchanges that occur never reach psychotherapeutic levels, but there is a definite feeling of emotional support and "groupiness." Finally, all participants have made a personal, financial and emotional commitment when they sign up. They commit themselves to be open to consider alternatives; they pay a fee for their participation and incur expenses in order to attend, including babysitting and gasoline. They are buying a service and judging from the interviews, everybody got enough to make it worth their time and money.

This type of program has tried to be attractive and useful to fathers. However, it is clear from our conversations with the participants that making attendance by the fathers mandatory would only succeed in barring some of the women who needed the most help.

In working mother families, by necessity and by virtue of the greater power of the wife and mother in the family, we found the fathers doing their fair share. This increased participation is not devoid of problems, but the relief valve that a full-fledged father can provide could easily solve many of the problems of the stay-at-home mothers, and it can be in itself gratifying to the fathers and children.

If we define impact as the articulation between a program's ideology and the needs of those it serves, then the impact of the Effective Parenting Course is significant. It would be naive to expect that without follow-up the concepts and techniques it provided parents will stay very long with them. Also, unless their social isolation is broken, these families will continue at risk. The program itself offers no special continuing support network. The referrals to participants to seek individual help might succeed in breaking present patterns of behavior. Its city-wide character makes it unlikely that any neighborhood friendship or support group could result from any course, given the size of the metropolitan area that it covers. Church or work-place related groups could provide the support needed at a human scale. The need is there.

E. The Effective Parenting Course as Cultural Elaboration

The information that we have collected about the Effective Parenting Course and the people that participated can now be used to complete the picture of the models of change proposed as underlying the program and its participants.

In our original conceptualization of the Cultural Elaboration model, we had assumed that the major sources of change in the families would be in terms of structure, especially single parent families, and in terms of greater participation of women in the labor force. Although the course was held in the evenings in order to allow these types of parents to participate, one half of the women who came represented the traditional father-working/mother-at-home-with-the-children nuclear family.

We expected that the participants would not be rejecting the parenting models with which they were raised, but rather attempting to improve them, to expand the tools and techniques, to elaborate further something that was already part of the mainstream American culture. We found some parents like that. However, we also found a large number of people who were rejecting the models of their parents and were engaged in a change of values, actively trying to avoid verbal and physical violence with their children.

All the participants accepted their personal responsibility for their behavior as parents, and their presence in the course was an attempt to change themselves. In most cases, the mothers participating had taken it upon themselves to improve the quality of their family life in spite of their husbands' incapacity or unwillingness to participate. Thus, for most of the participants in this course, it was an elaboration of mothering, but without any change in fathering.

This program operates on the parent-child relationship, or rather, on the mother-child relationship. In and by itself, it succeeded only temporarily to break the isolation of these families. Because it is not located near residential units, its chances of forming lasting friendships is not very high.

Participation in this course was only one of the things these families were doing to improve the quality of their lives. One participant has continued to enlarge her circle of friends and support by becoming active in the River City Parent Child Association. Another has pursued the formation of a local chapter of Parents Anonymous in her efforts to rehabilitate herself. Another expressed intentions to seek marital counseling to prevent a family breakup that was being aggravated by their problems with their children.

As we expected, the curriculum of the class represents a pragmatic assortment of concepts and techniques borrowed from various authors. There is no contradiction between alternative approaches because a certain diversity in the parents that are attracted is assumed. Spanking is not ruled out, but other techniques are offered that can be used instead. The problem-solving approach promoted is nothing new, except that parents seldom take the time to reflect on their practices. The class provided that necessary detachment for a few hours that allowed parents to reflect on their behavior and compare it with ideal models or with the behavior of other real life parents. That time-out may be the program's greatest contribution to the socialization of these parents. Until now, they have been learning on-the-job, and in the class they found an opportunity to step aside and look at themselves and their spouses.

The program, because of its short duration, cannot be expected to produce long lasting effects by itself. Its effectiveness, however, is enhanced by the readiness for change of its participants. All were aware that something was not working right and had some idea about where they wanted to go and where they did not want to go. Luckily for them, the program offered support for their choice of model and provided the necessary details to make it work better.

Unexpectedly, we found that a number of traditional nuclear families where the wife stays at home are at risk. In all the cases that we studied, the husbands had a restricted participation in child care and socialization. They could make the difference between stress and happiness. However, getting fathers to participate is not the job of these programs, but rather to help them learn how to participate and how to reach an understanding on values and techniques with their spouses.

Researchers and program developers could focus their attention on those families who have accomplished a rearrangement in their parenting responsibilities, and could identify and describe how this took place, what are the problems and strengths in their family life. Cultural elaboration programs can respond to this "new father" and to the "new mother" that is emerging, and focus on the changes in their parental roles. In the process, we may discover what are the successful strategies and pass the word to those just beginning the road to parenthood.

CHAPTER IV: THE MOTHER CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: A CASE STUDY OF CULTURAL REORIENTATION

by Kevin Batt

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A. The Program

The Mother Child Development Program is located in the west side of San Antonio, some three miles from downtown. It is one of several programs sponsored by the Loveman Christian Center, serving the Mexican-American *barrio*. The Mother Child Development Program provides a variety of services to selected families, including social and medical services, but the central thrust of the program is to teach mothers a number of concepts and skills in child development and home management and to provide their one to three year old children with planned educational experiences.

1. History

The program in San Antonio is an offshoot of a national effort in parent-child education. In 1970, the Office of Child Development funded pilot programs in three cities. These programs were set up as variations of parent/child education, each developing a model adapted to particular ethnic populations and regional conditions. All, however, were set up with similar goals, and were directed at target populations of low-income families. Moreover, all represented a federal initiative, supervised at a national level, and introduced into selected communities. One of these models was developed to meet the needs of low-income Mexican-American families and was located in another Texas city.

After five years of development and evaluation of the three pilot programs, a second phase of the project began, involving replication of the three original models. A management team, based in New York City, was funded to monitor the replication process "in the interests of maintaining program characteristics and quality," and to provide "unity of program management and financial support to all sites in the experiment." The second phase of this national experiment in parent education and early childhood education was partially funded by federal monies, but the bulk of financial support came from a private foundation.

One of the replication sites was the Mother Child Development Program in San Antonio. The Loveman Christian Center was chosen as the local sponsor for the program. A specially equipped facility was constructed diagonally across from the Center in 1975. While the physical facilities, equipment, and materials were being assembled, hiring and training of staff was initiated. Both the management team from New York and staff members of the original model center were involved in this process. The first group of mothers and children enrolled in the program in spring, 1976. In May, 1978, the first group of mothers and children graduated from the program, completing the full cycle as designed in the model for the program.

Shortly after this completion of one cycle, the private foundation funding the operation of the program withdrew its support. At the beginning of the fall season, when this ethnographic inquiry was about to begin, the director of the program was busy scrambling for alternative sources of funding. All of the alternative sources he pursued were Texas public and private monies. He was able to keep the program operating until mid-November with the hope that funds would become available. In November, he was forced to lay off most of his staff and announced to participating mothers a temporary suspension of the program. A financial package was finally negotiated in January and the program reopened in February. The financial crisis entailed a number of organizational changes in the program, including cut-back in staff numbers and hours, an increase in the number of families served, and alteration in numerous details of the operation of the program in order to save money. Incidents arising out of this financial crisis will be discussed insofar as they reveal the structure of relationships among staff and between staff and parents. However, the most significant curricular and organizational aspects of the program remained intact. These aspects were considered the indispensable parts of the program by the administrator of the program and were most frequently commented on by parents and other staff people in interviews conducted by this team of researchers. The bulk of analysis in this report concerns these "indispensable" aspects of the program.

2. Community Context

This brief account of the history of the MCDP points out a significant aspect of the organization. It is totally dependent on funding from distant sources. All staff members are ultimately responsible to higher-level administrators. The program is embedded in several bureaucratic structures. Neither staff nor parents can determine the basic direction of the program, but changes in direction may come about because of changing funding sources or priorities, rather than any changes in parental or community needs. The organization does not arise out of the community it serves, but rather enters into the barrio. The program seeks legitimacy by employing Mexican-American staff members. While some of these staff members lived at one time in the barrio, none of them currently live there.

To a great extent, staff members "remember where they come from," but at the same time aspire to professional roles and middle class life styles very different from the families of the barrio. The MCDP's location in the barrio, yet separation from the community, is a significant consequence of its organizational connections to far away agencies and institutions.

3. Setting

A six lane interstate highway cuts through San Antonio, just west of the central commercial district, marking off the eastern boundary of San Antonio's main Mexican-American barrio. Driving along the access road, one passes a parking lot where day laborers congregate waiting for trucks to arrive offering work. Further along, a sign looms marking a popular restaurant, serving inexpensive Mexican food, catering to banquets, and sponsoring community meetings. A block later, one passes an abandoned elementary school and a block of crooked frame houses, and then turning right, one drives along a main street into the dense neighborhoods of San Antonio's west side. Along this street, there are more frame houses, groceries, auto parts stores, bakeries. A new school constructed of massive bricks interspersed with narrow trapezoidal windows awaits finishing touches.

One street away stand several blocks of public housing. The cement block two story buildings stand in rows, one apartment deep with about fifteen feet of grass between them. These projects are called the "courts." Many of the walls are decorated with random spray-painting and graffiti, but on one wall, a mural depicts two scenes. In one, a father and mother embrace their children; in the other, the children sit attentively in a classroom receiving instruction. At the same intersection, across the street in one direction from the mural is a light brown brick building, housing the Loveman Christian Center. Across the intersecting street stands a newer tan brick building, surrounded by a chain-link fence. This is where three or four vans arrive every morning to unload the mothers and children participating in the Mother Child Development Program.

A sliding gate, some six feet wide, opens in front of the building.

Between the fence and the building is a ribbon of grass about five feet wide. To one side of the new building, still within the fence, is a patio. On the other side of the patio stands a frame house, serving as office space for the director, the associate director, the social worker, and other staff members of the program. At different times, children come out to play on the patio. Entering the main center, one passes through heavy metal double doors into a corridor. Along the corridor hang bulletin boards. On one side are memos and postcards directed to staff members. On the other side is a larger bulletin board, covered with burlap, with a painting on paper in the center. The painting silhouettes an outline of two adults with a child. Around this image are stencilled the names and a few small snapshots of mothers and children in the program.

Just inside the doors, a small office with a plate glass window faces the corridor; this is the nurse's office. The corridor spills out into a high ceilinged large main room, beams cutting across the ceiling, white plaster walls, and linoleum floors. Some large brown paper paintings in reds, blues and yellows hang high up on the walls. A sea of low hexagonal tables, each with several low children's size chairs about them, spreads across the room covering two-thirds of the floor space. Two large classrooms adjoin this main room along one wall. Each of these classrooms is filled with toys, shelves, games, and equipment for young children. Between the two classrooms is a small room with one-way glass observation windows into each classroom. Within this small room, one finds videotape equipment and a third window looking into a small closet-like room, large enough only for two people; this is the "testing room." At the end of the main room are two smaller rooms with desks, tables and adult-size chairs in them.

Between these two rooms is another observation room with one-way windows looking into each of the two meeting rooms. This observation room is also used as a storage closet.

Outside these three rooms, on one wall of the main room, a wall collage of stencilled words and pictures is displayed. The magazine pictures depict cultural themes from the traditional ranch culture of northern Mexico, themes which reappear in the costumes and activities of fiesta days in many South Texas cities. The pictures of ranches and senoritas on the wall contrast sharply, however, with urban scenes and city faces one could find walking outside in the barrio. Capitalized words, stencilled and fixed to the wall around the pictures, announce some of the resonant categories in the culture of this community center: "Home," "Honesty," "Beauty," "Values," "Respect," "Love," "Family Ties," "Religious Beliefs." The stencilled words and construction paper backing recalled bulletin board displays in high schools. As in high schools, it was unclear who chose the display to mean what to whom. In the corner of the room, next to this display was an item unlikely to be found in a school. A potted plant in a long macrame holder stood out distinctively as the only uniquely adult bit of decor.

At the opposite end of the room were two doors leading to a men's and a women's bathroom and a door leading into a kitchen. Next to the kitchen door a long open counter between the main room and the kitchen allowed food to be served directly. Between the two bathroom doors, on a bulletin board, a poster suggested "hospitality and recreational careers," including careers as a motel owner and as a ski instructor. Along the fourth wall of the main room were several sewing machines, some long tables, some black metal storage cabinets, and some movable blackboards which were frequently pulled out into the room.

Every morning, Mondays through Thursdays, the mothers and children enrolled in the program come into the center. On a typical day, once the program is underway some weeks, the children immediately go to one of the two classrooms (depending on their age group). Meanwhile, the mothers squat down on the small chairs and tables in the main room. Except for one forty-five minute class in one of the two meeting rooms, they will continue to sit in the child-size chairs throughout the morning, occasionally stretching and going to the bathroom, but usually uncomfortably perched on the little chairs in front of the little tables. Various staff members, on the other hand, are usually standing, conducting a class, walking about the center, in and out of various rooms, and occasionally leaning over or getting down to talk with one of the mothers. At lunch time mothers and children reunite, set places for themselves at the hexagonal tables, line up for food at the kitchen counter, and go back to the hexagonal tables. About noon, mothers and children exit, chatting a few last minutes with staff members and climb into the vans which will deliver them to their homes again.

Within the four walls of the building, any first time visitor could see that a great deal of time and planning had been devoted to create a particular setting. From the design and construction of the building to the details of decor, conscious and perhaps sometimes unconscious intentions were at work. To some extent, these intentions are captured by the formal goals of the program.

4. Goals of Program

A mimeographed brochure authored by the Replication Management Organization was circulated at commencement exercises for the first wave of mothers and children, offering: "The primary goal is to provide educational opportunities and a variety of supportive systems for families with low incomes who are raising very young children." This statement emphasizes supporting and educating families, with young children benefitting no more than any other members. In the same brochure, this broad goal is further delineated by a list of "features" of the design of all the programs across the nation.

--"The mother is viewed as the primary recipient of the program effect.

--"The focus is on the first three years of the child's life.

--"The programs include a broad range of content on young children and their development; health and nutrition; family life; knowledge of community resources; and other topics that can help mothers become as effective as possible in all aspects of their lives.

--"The (MCDPs) provide a range of social and health services for the participants.

--"The program staff includes people with different educational and professional qualifications. The majority of each staff is from the same cultural and ethnic background as the mothers.

--"Continuing staff development is an integral part of the program design."

While these statements are not phrased as goals, they clarify the primary goal statement in at least one important way: the mother is the primary recipient of the services offered by the program.

While the New York based management organization defines the program with emphasis placed on families and changing the mother, another brochure handed out at the same commencement exercise states: "It's goal is to

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develop and demonstrate ways of strengthening families and enabling parents to optimize the intellectual, social, and physical development of their young children, and to maintain these gains over a long period of time." This statement demonstrates a different perspective from the Management team's perspective. A much stronger emphasis is placed on the outcomes expected for the child enrolled in the program, with an implication that families need to be strengthened as an instrument to help optimize the development of children. Secondly, the experimental nature of the program, rather than the service aspect of the program, is emphasized in the phrase "develop and demonstrate ways."

A third document, authored by one of the principal designers and evaluators of the original model program, in a 1976 report, emphasizes to an even greater extent that the program is aimed at children and the parents are instrumental in furthering the development of school-related behavior of their children.

"The ultimate goal of the program is to help parents help their own children to optimize their school performance." The document continues to specify goals for each family member: that mothers "will be affectionate, use non-restrictive controls, provide opportunities for exploration and curiosity, encourage verbal interaction, view the home as a learning environment, provide for interesting, challenging play experiences, and view herself as a teacher of her child;" that fathers "will support the participation of their wives in program and see themselves as important teachers of their children;" and that children "will be competent cognitively, linguistically, and socially."

It prescribes a set of roles and relationships in the family that are functionally (or "transactionally") designed to promote successful school performance by the family's children. In this set of interrelated goals, the mother is seen not so much as a person who has her own needs but rather as an agent ("a teacher") in her child's development; in turn, the father is seen as a support for the mother performing her role; and the family is seen as a preschool, whose main concerns should be preparing children for school.

The 1976 document conceives the program as a means of overcoming the alleged cultural deficit of children growing up in low-income Mexican-American families, rather than rationalizing the program as a way of "strengthening families." The change in emphasis may have been more a consequence of changing priorities in the research community, among funding agencies, and in public policy, than changes in the needs of the Mexican-American families served by the program.

But if this change in emphasis is not a response to changing needs of the families served, what is the program all about? Given the level of energy and commitment devoted to research components in this program, one is led to believe that the program is set up to prove its own rationale rather than to serve somebody. In later sections of this report, the tension between research and service rationales for the program will be discussed as it affects the organization, recruitment of participants, and other aspects of the program.

When various staff members were interviewed and asked what they thought the program was trying to accomplish, their answers echoed to some extent the goals set out in formal statements, but there appeared significant differences as well. For example, the director responded:

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> The main goal of our program is to give the mother the skills that will allow her to bring up her children, physically, mentally, and emotionally stable. Now, that's our main goal. So in order to do this, there's a lot of things that we cover in our program. We try to make her aware as much as possible of the different social services that are available. We give her instruction in child development. We give her an opportunity to work in the classroom as a teacher assistant with not just her child but with all the kids. We also try to provide classes for whatever their interests are, like sewing or driver's ed. Those are the two main classes that they're most interested in. We also provide nutrition classes on a limited basis. So hopefully all of this knowledge will help her attain that goal in which she becomes efficient enough so that whatever problems her family might have, she's able to find a resource for it.

The transformations from goals in the 1976 document cited above are significant. The goal for children of "cognitive, linguistic, and social (competence), quoted in the 1976 report is transformed into "physical, mental and emotional stability" by the director of the program. The emphasis on school behaviors for children is diluted, while interest in the well-being of the whole child is stressed. The director's definition of goals for mothers subsumes her teaching role within a larger category of being able to cope efficiently with problems that her family has. The primary goals, as defined by the director, seem to be to promote parental coping behavior and children's stability, goals of strengthening the family rather than narrowly focusing on what mothers have to do to improve their children's future academic achievement.

The director's interpretation of the goals continues to stress that the child is the ultimate beneficiary of the program. All staff members agreed with this emphasis. Yet, some suggested that a secondary goal of the program was to support mothers themselves, as people with their own needs. The parent education supervisor, a young Mexican-American woman, indicated:

> It's trying to enhance the mother's knowledge about her child--how she can be, you know, better equipped to help her child. And also to enhance her, as a person, in areas, you touch on areas like nutrition and sewing--things that are going to build up her self-esteem. And then this, in turn, will hopefully influence not only her working with the program child, but in her relationship with her husband, and her relationship to her other children and those around her, and her immediate surrounding, like the relatives.

Staff members, by and large, did not mention research as one of the goals of the program. Working directly with parents and children, they often resented the paper-work imposed by the research demands of the program. They felt that providing information on alternative ways to raise children and providing a variety of services to parents was their main goal. While they recognized that a research component of the program dictated a number of features in the organization of the program and in the recruitment of participants, they thought that the research goals interfered with realization of service goals.

What is the significance of the difference between the goal statements of the program and the program goals expressed by staff members? A number of features of the program are fixed by the organizational design, the recruitment policies, and the curriculum, all of which the staff believe they can modify but not radically change. They can, however, rationalize these basic features of the program by reinterpreting the goals for which they are set up. In so doing, they mediate the effect of the program on the parents. Deemphasizing the goal of promoting school performance of children is one such mediation.

5. Organization of the Program: Components

The organization designed to accomplish these goals consists of a number of components which can be classified into three general areas: educational components, social and medical service components, and research and evaluation components. Staff and parents spend by far the majority of their time in educational components. These consist of a home visiting phase, an in-center phase, family workshops, and parent meetings.

a. Educational Components

When a child selected for program participation reaches approximately one year of age, a parent educator begins to visit the family's home. Over the next eight to ten months, the educator makes some thirty visits, attempting to see the mother and child once a week. The educator consults a curriculum guideline before going out to her visit, gathers toys and materials designed to teach a specific topic in child development, and goes to meet with the mother.

These visits last from one to two hours. The mother's role in teaching "sensory, perceptual, conceptual, language, motor and social development" is stressed. According to a hand-out on the "In-Home Program,"

> The educator uses open-ended questions as much as possible when discussing the topic for that week so that the mother is able to share her ideas on the major points. A review of the previous topic is done before each new visit. In asking questions, the educator learns what the mother already knows. Also the educator discovers how the mother feels about helping her child in certain areas of child development. Our role as an In-Home Educator begins in that we fill in with additional information which the parent may need; thus, making the shared learning approach more meaningful.

While this quotation suggests a collaborative style sought after in home visiting, the structure of the encounter is based on the asymmetrical relationship of teacher to student. Adherence to a topic planned by the educator rather than one chosen by the parent guarantees that the educator will control the information flow. This structure is reinforced by the written materials ("activity sheets") which the educator leaves each week with the mother. Some sheets "suggest" to the mother how to use particular toys or books with her child, while others are "assignments" preceding visits "to further enhance the concept and theme of that visit."

During this first year of home visiting, a second component of the program takes place. Family Workshops are held on four Sundays at intervals during the year. These workshops are designed especially to attract fathers to participate. Each workshop is centered around a major theme: 1) Communications, 2) Decision-making, 3) Problem Solving, and 4) Role Relationship within the family and as the family relates to the community. Each of these themes is broad enough to include any number of concrete examples to work on or issues to discuss. Usually, one or more speakers are invited to address the parents and sometimes a film is shown to provoke discussion. While a significant amount of planning must take place in order to fill the morning and afternoon workshop sessions, staff people apparently feel they can deviate from the program design to a much greater extent than in other components of the program. Thus, the theme of the second workshop was changed from "decision-making" to discipline and child abuse after a number of parents expressed interest in having speakers and information on the latter topics.

Upon completion of the "In-Home" phase of the program mothers and children begin the "In-Center" phase of the program. Between 8:15 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., three vans tour the neighborhood stopping house to house

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to pick up mothers and children for the center.

Arriving at the center, mothers sign in. On a typical day after the in-center phase has begun, children will leave their mothers and be taken to the children's classrooms by one of the children's teachers or an aide. Only the selected "program children" are cared for in these classrooms. Several mothers have older preschool children or infants, neither age group fitting the age criteria for being in the program. These children are shunted to a "sibling room" across the street in the Loveman Christian Center building. This room contrasts strikingly with the colorful, well-equipped classrooms for the "program children." Windowless and furnished with well-used equipment, staffed by a CETA worker, the room suggested day-care warehousing of the siblings.

Sometime after 9:00 a.m., after arrivals and greetings settle down, all the mothers gather and sit at the small hexagonal tables. Many times a blackboard has been placed in front of the group. At this time, parent educators make announcements, go over scheduling for the week, plan special events such as field trips, bake sales, or address problems that have arisen. Although the parent educator controls this meeting, introducing business, and standing above the mothers, she solicits opinions and encourages discussion among the mothers.

At 9:30, the mothers split into two groups. One of the groups moves towards one of the smaller classrooms at the end of the main room. These classes last forty-five minutes. At 10:15, everyone takes a break, returning to the main room, perhaps pouring themselves some coffee. At 10:30, a second class begins, and the two groups switch off. By the end of the day, both groups have had classes in child development and either sewing or nutrition, depending on the day. At 11:15, the mothers go to the classrooms to get their children, and siblings return from across the street. They set out silverware, napkins and plates for themselves and their children. Then everyone lines up at the counter and serves themselves the lunch for the day. Federal lunch program monies finance the meal. When lunch is finished, mothers and children clean up, ready themselves to leave, chat with their friends briefly, and then leave in the vans.

The in-center phase of the program is augmented by night meetings scheduled once a month. Fathers are encouraged to come to these meetings. They usually begin with coffee and dessert at 7:30 and last until 8:30 or 9:00 P.M. During the meetings, children may stay with their parents in the main room, or go with one of the classroom teachers and play in the classrooms.

Parent educators solicit suggestions from mothers the month prior to a meeting concerning what kind of activity or speaker they would like to have for the meeting. The parent meetings are designed in the program model and considered by the staff to be the most parent-directed component of the program. In practice, however, the parent educators are responsible for securing a speaker for the group and making arrangements for the meeting. As a result, the parent educators tend to offer to the parents a limited number of options for the meeting and try to win the parents over to a topic for which they know they can get a speaker. In line with the greater emphasis on parents determining their own meeting, staff members moved in adult furniture into the main room for the meeting. Thus, when fathers come to the center, they are not expected to squat in the little chairs that mothers must use during the morning hours.

b. Research and Evaluation Components

Built into the original design of the Mother Child Development Program was a longitudinal research project. For the purposes of this project, certain selection criteria were imposed such that children born within five months of each other would form a cohort. According to this design, "waves" of mothers and children would enter the program every six months and data on children in successive cohorts could be accumulated over the two year period in which they were involved with the program. Once they reached school age, these children would be followed until the third grade. Essential to this research design was the necessity of establishing a control group of mothers and children who would not participate in the educational components, but would agree to periodic evaluations. Their participation in the control group was encouraged by the offer of social and medical services of the program. In the recruitment for the program, potential participants who met other criteria were told that they would be selected for either the educational program or for the control group.

When the program was inaugurated in 1976, two waves of mothers and children moved through the in-center phase, but had not completed the in-home phase. In June, 1978, the first wave to have completed the whole cycle of program phases graduated. In January, the second complete wave was to have graduated, but the suspension of program activities prevented their completion of the full curriculum. With staff cutbacks, guidelines of new funding resources, and greater emphasis on service, the research design was given second priority. An equal number of control subjects was not identified for all the participants, and the wave scheduling was dropped, so that all in-center participants currently receive the same instruction at the same time.

In addition to the selection criteria, the research component necessitates the administration of a variety of tests and instruments, as well as the filing of a number of process measures by staff. An evaluator meets with all mothers before they are enrolled in the program to collect baseline information. This phase of data collection involves three interviews alone. When entering the in-center phase of the program, mothers are videotaped in directed play with their children. Close to the end of the program they are taped again. Tapes are also made of separation events and classroom teaching by mothers. These tapes are saved for research purposes as well as for self-evaluation by the mothers themselves.

In addition to this longitudinal study of changes in mothers' behaviors and children's performance in school, a second "research" project studies the replication process of the program. The replication management team monitors and evaluates the degree to which the original model is replicated. This team helped hire the assistant and associate directors, regularly participated in training sessions, and consulted on policy decisions, with the intent of documenting the process.

This ethnographic inquiry was the third research project going on with the program. This project established a distinct relationship with the program. It was not funded or charged with any particular responsibility to the program and was therefore independent--rather than integrated as a "component" of the program.

c. Service Components

Service components consist of counseling and referrals to social service agencies for assistance in such areas as food stamps and welfare. The medical services consist of using the Loveman medical clinic, counseling on health needs, physical examinations and immunization of the children, interpreting between Spanish speakers and medical personnel, and emergency transportation. These services are available to people both in the "experimental" group and in the "control" group. They are clearly considered by staff to be a secondary aspect of the program. Even the social worker considers them to be "ancillary services."

6. The Parent Education Curriculum: Ideology of Motherhood

The physical setting, organization, and recruitment procedures of the Mother Child Development Program all signify and have impact in their own right, but they are also merely the forms that contain, prop up, or transmit core messages directed at changing the mother's role in raising her children. The most clear expression of these messages can be found in the curriculum.

The curriculum consists of two broad areas: child development and home management. The first of these is considered by staff and by some parents as the most important topic and the reason why mothers should be a part of the program at all. Two curriculum manuals spell out in great detail the content and style of lessons for the first and second years of child development. These manuals were written by the original designers of the program. The first year's manual consists of thirty lessons for the weekly home visits. Most of these lessons have to do with teaching how to play with a variety of toys.

a. In-Center Curriculum Manual

The second year manual is bound in two looseleaf notebooks, some 300 pages long. The manual has twenty-eight topics. Each topic specifies objectives for mothers, a general purpose of the lesson, procedures and materials, emphases, additional content, references, assignments, exercises, instruction sheets, etc. The degree of specification in the manual indicates the levels of control exerted through the curriculum. On one level, the parent educators are directed in specific ways, including the wording they are expected to use in talking about particular topics. On a second level, the degree of specificity of the curriculum cuts down on the amount of flexibility in the classes and the opportunity for mothers to direct child development classes away from the lesson plan and towards something of their own choosing. The structure of the curriculum guide can only exert control over staff and parents if they let it. From observation of some parent education classes, the in-center supervisor tried to stick to the manual fairly closely and was usually able to control digressions by the mothers in her class, but the other parent educator was less confident of her use of the manual, and mothers strayed from the topic into their own analyses and anecdotes. Yet, a number of the topics were not matters of discussion, but rather matters of action, such as the two weeks when mothers and children separated from each other, the various videotaping exercises, and the teaching exercises that parents went through. In these cases, staff members exerted a great deal of direction and control over the mothers, and neither discussion nor digression undercut staff control.

Table I lists the curriculum topics from the manual. Next to this list is the amount of time planned by the in-center supervisor for each topic for the fall semester when this team of researchers began visiting and observing classes. No one group of mothers went through the entire cycle in that period. While one group of mothers covered approximately

TABLE I

	TOPIC	NUMBER OF DAYS SPENT ON TOPIC	MAIN FOCUS
* 1.	Pre-tape microteaching	10-20 minutes/person	Research measure
* 2.	Mother-child separation (Individual session)	6-12 days	Separation
* 3.	Orientation to child development curriculum	1 day	Orientation
* 4.	Mother-child separation (Group session)	(See topic #2)	Separation
* 5.	Recalling an early childhood experience	6 days	Understanding children's perspective
6.	The child's classroom	Skipped in observed semester	Children's perspective
7.	Children's basic needs	Skipped in observed semester	Children's perspective
* 8.	Positive Guidance A	9 days	Guidance and discipline
9.	Positive Guidance B	2 days	Guidance and discipline
10.	Observation of guidance techniques	2 days	Guidance and discipline
11.	Role-playing of guidance techniques	3 days	Guidance and discipline
**12.	Introduction to microteaching	3 days	Teaching
**13.	Microteaching session on reinforcement	3 days	Teaching
**14.	Self-concept	2 days	Understanding children's perspective
15.	Language development	3 days	Teaching
16.	Observation of language techniques	Skipped in observed semester	Teaching

TABLE I, Continued.

	TOPIC	NUMBER OF DAYS SPENT ON TOPIC	MAIN FOCUS
17.	Microteaching session on language	2 days	Teaching
**18.	Mother participation in the classroom	6 days	Teaching
19.	Toy selection	2 days (pre-Christmas)	Teaching
20.	Learning concepts through toys	2 days	Teaching
21.	Microteaching session on labeling concept	3 days	Teaching
22.	Dramatic play	Skipped in observed semester	Guidance and discipline
**23.	Children and television	2 days	Guidance and discipline
**24.	Art for the two-year-old	2 days	Teaching
**25.	Art workshop for mothers	1 day	Other
26.	Sex education for young children	2 days	Guidance and discipline
(**)(*)27.	Children's fears	First group: 8 days Second group: 2 days	Understanding children's perspective
28.	Observing a preschool program	3 days	Community resources

one-half of the lessons, the second group of mothers (who had come to the center the previous spring) covered the second half of the lessons. With the suspension of the program neither group completed the planned activities. The time listed in the second column of Table I represents the planned emphasis. The asterisk indicates the lessons covered by the first group of mothers before the suspension and the double asterisk represents the lessons covered by the second group of mothers. When the program reopened in February, first time mothers were "caught up" with returning mothers who had already covered the first few lessons. By the end of May, lessons on discipline (Topics 8-11) were completed for the whole group. Both the amount of time allocated for each topic and their sequencing was determined by the in-center director. It is clear that some topics were not considered as important, at least in terms of time spent on them. The topics in the manual are planned in a coherent sequence, which the in-center supervisor followed with two exceptions. She planned the topic on children's fears (#27) to precede Halloween and the topics on children's toys (19-20) to precede Christmas.

The third column in Table I breaks the curriculum topics into categories suggesting the main focus of each lesson. This column indicates the aspect of the mother's role which is addressed in the lessons. The overall sequence begins with an extended focus on the process whereby a mother and her two year old child separate. In the context of the program, separation involves a gradual lengthening of the amount of time a mother is absent from the children's classroom, until by the end of two weeks, mothers and children are involved in separate activities in different rooms for the whole morning. Time spent on individual separations varied for different mothers and children, as indicated in the table.

Following separation and an introduction to child development curriculum, the class focuses on how it feels to be a child. This lesson is one of several in which children's needs and points of view are discussed. These lessons seem to be interspersed among other blocks of lessons. Lesson 5 leads into a block of lessons on positive guidance and discipline techniques, constituting one of the main messages of the program concerning the mother's role. The other main message, for which the most amount of time is planned, concerns training mothers to teach their children and promote their cognitive and linguistic development. The last several lessons appear to be a miscellaneous array of potentially entertaining, or problematic, topics, ending with a brief field trip to acquaint mothers with other preschool facilities that they may be interested in using while their child is still not in formal school.

b. Curriculum Implementation

In Table II, the time planned and the time actually spent on each of these main foci is summarized. The time planned suggests the relative emphasis the program staff hoped to give to each focus. With the suspension of the program, some of the lessons were not completed. Most of the first group of mothers returned in Spring, 1979, and reviewed the lessons from the fall and continued with the curriculum as planned. The mothers in the second group had already completed the first half of the curriculum in Spring, 1978. In the fall they did not complete a number of the lessons focusing on teaching, but they did have time to participate as teachers in the children's classrooms.

This team of researchers set up interviews with mothers in both the

TABLE II

MAIN FOCUS	PLANNED TIME ALLOCATED	ACTUAL TIME SPENT BEFORE PROGRAM SUSPENSION	
		First group mothers	Second group mothers
Separation	6-12 days	6-12 days	6-12 days
Understanding children's perspective	16 days	14 days	4 days (Covered topic 5 in spring, 1978)
Guidance and discipline	20 days	2 days	2 days (Covered topics 8-11 in spring, 1978)
Teaching	25 days	Not planned	13 days
Community resources	3 days	Not planned	0 days
Other (Topics 1, 3, 25)	3 days	2 days	3 days

first and second groups. With the suspension in the program, interviews with mothers in the second group, who had been through most of the sequence, proved more valuable in assessing overall program impact. In the later section of this report, case examples of participants are almost exclusively drawn from this second group of mothers.

c. Main Foci of Curriculum

The next few pages will outline in greater detail the four main foci of the child development curriculum: separation, understanding children's perspectives, guidance and discipline, and teaching. In addition, aspects of the home management curriculum will be addressed.

Separation

Before the beginning of the fall semester at the MCDP, one of the ethnographers attended a training session for staff of the program. One of the workshops, conducted by the in-center supervisor, reviewed activities for the first two weeks of the program. The activities were all designed as part of a scenario referred to as "separation." The ethnographer noted that "separation" was a marked word, as if capitalized in the speech of staff members. It became clear in this training session that for the program and the staff, "separation" entailed a great deal more than transition by mothers and children so that each could get started in their respective classes. It also meant more than a few minutes or a few days of children crying, mothers' anxiety, and staff awkwardness. While separation functioned as a transition and produced stress, most importantly it represented a conscious articulation of program ideology. Organized into a sequence of steps lasting up to three weeks, governed by a set of rules repeated numerous times, "separation" attempted to break down, analyze, and reconstruct according to prescribed behavior the relationships existing between mothers and children coming into the center. The very formality of the scenario is what contrasts with separations that occur between mothers and children at child care centers, with babysitters, and in other similar situations. In the MCDP, "separation" can justifiably be seen as a rite de passage, acting not only as an initiation of mothers and children into the program itself, but also into the society, whose ideology the program represents.

The first day that mothers and children arrive at the center, they are greeted by the various staff members, who lead them into the children's classrooms. The children's classrooms are very busy that day. Children's teachers and aides start playing with the children, mothers sit in various places in the little children's chairs, and parent educators move from mother to mother whispering information or conversing about the program. Very quickly, the educators begin to orient mothers to the separation process that they will enact in the next few days. They make clear that the first day, the mothers must stay with their children in the classroom. They ask mothers how they think their children feel being in the classroom and other didactic questions. Mothers are also directed to "observe" their children, while the parent educator goes and talks with other mothers. Returning for a second round of conversation, each mother reports her observations, and parent educators offer interpretations for children's behavior. According to the curriculum manual, parent educators are supposed to stress in these conversations that children need reassurance in strange environments, that their fears are legitimate, and that they need to develop trust.

In subsequent days, mothers are directed to leave the classroom for brief moments. When they do, they are to inform children where they are going and how long they will be gone. Two to five minutes is the interval suggested for the first few absences. When they return to the classroom they should let children know they are back, but without making a display of the reuniting. In a hand-out to mothers, fourteen instructions specify the behaviors expected by the program, ranging from admonitions to relax to prescriptions for wording and inflection when mothers leave the classroom. Over the course of two weeks, mothers leave for longer and longer periods of time. While they are outside the classroom, they are encouraged to "observe" their children through the observation window. In the main room, magazines on child development are available to read. No formal classes for mothers occur during the first week since they are supposed to be attending to the separation process. Some separations occur quickly with little resistance on the part of the child, while others take greater time and patience on the part of the mother and the parent educators. But the staff encourages drawing out the process when necessary, reassuring the mother that each child is unique and that the pace of separation does not reflect either on her child or on herself.

The staff also videotapes scenes in the classroom to use in the group discussion of separation when mothers begin to meet for child development classes, which begin five to ten days into the semester. During these sessions, mothers are asked to recall their children's behaviors and feelings during separation; educators elaborate on the theme of children learning to trust their mothers, their teachers, and the new environment; they discuss how the separation process relates to a child's adjustment to a school environment (the curriculum guide suggests that, "A child's teacher is possibly the first significant person in his life besides his mother."); procedures for separating as spelled out in the earlier hand-out are reviewed and evaluated. Finally, the mothers' own feelings about separation are probed.

As an organized rite de passage, for mothers and for children, "separation" attempts to change the status of mothers and the relationship they have with their children. The objectives of the process, as stated in the curriculum manual, are:

I. To understand what separation anxiety is.

II. To understand the importance of the child's trust in his teacher.

III. To learn effective ways of leaving the classroom and still leave the child comfortable and secure.

IV. To accept one's own anxiety as a mother upon separation from the child.

These objectives suggest that a mother's role and status be changed by passing through the separation process. Her status as primary care giver of her child is henceforth a status shared and perhaps superceded by the classroom teacher. Her role is changed in that she is expected to accept her own anxiety, while at the same time reassuring her child. "Separation" attempts to break apart the relationship she has had with her child. A new relationship, prescribed by the program, where she becomes a "teacher," must await the final act of the program, some weeks hence.

Techniques employed to ritualize the "separation" include: objectification of children and mothers through "observing" and videotaping; repeated dramatization of the separation event through the directed comings and goings of mothers in and out of the classroom; scripting of the events through the written hand-outs and verbal prompting of the staff; critiquing the performance of mothers in the group sessions; and continuous interpretations of the event given by staff.

Stage managing the experience, however, contains its own problems. The ritualization of separation suggests that it cannot occur successfully without a script and the intervention of the stage managers. The ritual is founded on the premise that children will not separate easily from their mothers, nor that mothers will separate easily from their children. Resistance is expected on the part of both mothers and children. Not surprisingly, mothers frequently fulfilled the expectation that they would not play their part right. When asked to comment on sources of conflict between parents and staff, the in-center supervisor pointed out separation as one of the main areas of conflict.

> The mothers, they know that there is a separation process. And yet, I catch them sneaking out, running out of the room, hiding from the child, or not telling him the truth about where they're going, you know. They'll say, 'I'll be right back. I'm going to go drink coffee.' And they're not. They're going outside to go stay and sew, or they're going to the child development class. And I will usually stop them, and I will say, 'Mrs. So-And-So, would you come in here, please. Let's observe your child, what just happened.' And they'll say, 'Well, I got out,' and all this. And I'll say, 'Well, did you tell him, though?' And they'll say, 'Well, no, because if I tell him, he's going to cry.' And I'll say, 'Well, OK, you need to go back in there.' And I'll say, 'Remember, remember what we talked about. In the separation process that the sheet that you read, and we went over, that you are supposed to try and tell him this. Now just try it.' And 'Oh, but he'll cry.' And I'll say, 'Well, you know he's going to cry whether you tell him the truth or whether you sneak out.'

While in the passage just quoted, mothers are faulted with leaving their children improperly, they are also criticized for staying with their children improperly, as in the following comment by one of the parent educators.

> You don't want to make the mother feel like she doesn't know anything about raising her child and at the same time you have to let her know, in a certain way, that she's doing the wrong thing (laugh). Like, it happens often, like a mother goes into the classroom with her child during separation. She won't leave her child alone. She follows him all over the room and the teacher might be trying to show the child something. Like the fish yesterday, this happened and the mother's over there trying to see too. I creep in there, tapped the mother on the shoulder and tell her, 'Vénga se pa acá, come over here,' and very quietly, to get her away from distracting the child. She says a, the mother said yesterday, 'Ay, pués yo también quería ver los pescaditos.' And she wanted to see the fish, too. And so her child turns around and runs to momma and she had distracted him from what he was doing. And we are trying to reach the mother to let the child go.

Separation, then, is an orchestrated intervention to establish some proper distance between mother and child. Mothers must learn to "let go," but they must not "sneak away." The program attempts to transform the role of mother by limiting her contact and control but adding to her responsibilities: she is supposed to share control with the teacher, but she is also supposed to be supportive, attentive, and eventually become an agent of the school's objectives for the child.

Understanding Children's Point of View

Interspersed throughout the curriculum are several lessons designed to develop understanding of children's points of view. The lesson on "recalling childhood experience" precedes the block of lessons on "positive guidance" and discipline techniques. Other lessons with this main focus are "children's fears" and "self-concept." "Children's fears" is integrated with preparations for a Halloween party, which also includes costume design in sewing class. "Self-concept" precedes lessons and exercises in teaching in the children's classroom.

"Recalling an early childhood experience" is the first chance in the curriculum for mothers to begin to talk about themselves. The educator begins the session by giving information about herself and her family and then recounts an incident in her early childhood, discussing her feelings then as a child and now as an adult. The educator's talk is a model for mothers in the class who are asked to talk about their own backgrounds and childhood experiences. The group discuss relationships with mothers and with siblings, maternal influences that the women pass on to their children, children's feelings when they are punished, and the differences between children and adults in the way they apprehend the world. The lesson concludes with an exercise in which mothers try to guess what is in a colorfully wrapped box and what feelings it evokes. They then go to the children's classrooms and watch their children react to a bag full of different objects.

"Children's fears" concentrates on understanding fear as a normal reaction to certain situations and emphasizes ways that parents can help children overcome fear by introducing children gradually to strange situations, unknown people, or feared objects. A home activity sheet asks mothers to list three things that their children feared during the week and what they did about it.

"Self-concept" emphasizes that the formation of a positive self-concept occurs during the first five years of life. It suggests ways for helping children cope with failure and marks two years of age as the point when children start to try to do things on their own. Thus, mothers of two-year-olds should encourage independence, while still being ready for dependency when children are frustrated. The lesson on self-concept links back to separation anxiety and the necessity to develop a child's trust and confidence, and projects forward to lessons on teaching by discussing the necessity of good self-concept for academic achievement.

These lessons convey most directly one of the central premises of the program's childrearing philosophy, that children have a point of view, and that parents should be cognizant of it in their interactions with them. This premise informs the block of lessons on positive guidance and discipline techniques and is logically introduced just before them. The associate director commented on general changes in childrearing philosophy that the program is trying to promote:

> There is a lot of old-fashioned ideas, and (by) old-fashioned I mean that they are bringing up kids the way that they were brought up. And many times they aren't too happy with the way that they were brought up, but they don't know any other way. So they're very happy to find out that other parents feel the same way, and that we have information for them that can give them an alternative to childrearing, and I think we do that. I think we do that in a way that we don't tell them look, you've been doing it wrong all this time, or look, you were brought up wrong all this time. You must be off somewhere. Because many of us here on the staff were brought up differently than what we would want to bring up our own children, or in other words, we share something with them.... I think one of the main (new ways) is that children are important and they are individuals as we are.... (We are) trying to show them that the child has gone through activities, and he does have something to tell you if you will just listen to him, not just now, but become aware of how listening to your child many times will give you the key to what it is you need to do, what is the next step. And then when they have problems, you try to make them look back, 'What do you think the problem is caused by?' And not blame everything on the child or labeling the child, well, 'he's spoiled'....

One of the key idiomatic expressions overheard frequently by observers in the center is "getting down on their level." By suggesting that it is a key phrase, we suggest that it means a number of different things, depending on context. At the same time the phrase with its various referents transcends context and comes to stand for a pattern of communication that marks various relationships in the center. This analysis will be pursued at a later point in this report. Here, it represents educators' urgings that mothers get down on their children's level. It is a quite literal direction to mothers to stoop or hunch down to listen to and talk with their children. Getting down on the level of children is apparently the reason why mothers are expected to sit on chairs built to fit two-year-olds. And getting down on their level is why classroom teachers invite mothers to sit on the carpeted floor with them to play with the children.

Beyond its literal referent to a child's size, getting down on their level suggests one of the thrusts of these lessons. They attempt to sensitize mothers to the level of their two-year-old's maturational development. While these lessons are the most direct expression of this theme, other lessons build on it. Exercises in both the teaching and the discipline lessons involve mothers role-playing children.

The substance of these lessons is derived from fairly standard concepts of child development in recent literature and promote an ideology of egalitarian relationships between parents and children. The lessons serve another function in the program as well. By a manipulated regression to their own childhood and to children's levels, mother's status as an adult is suspended. They are presumably then more ready to learn the skills and behaviors advocated by the program in the sessions on discipline and teaching. In this sense, egalitarianism is promoted between mothers and children and denied between staff and mothers.

Positive Guidance

The main block of lessons on positive guidance covers concepts and techniques of children's discipline. Some forty pages of the manual are devoted to this focus. Strategies for discipline discussed in these classes include 1) listening to children, 2) critically assessing children's behavior, 3) changing the environment to modify behavior, 4) avoiding negative commands, 5) setting limits, 6) providing children with choices, 7) avoiding bribes, threats, or comparisons with other children, 8) distracting children from undesirable behavior, 9) reinforcing positive behavior, 10) ignoring undesirable behavior, and 11) modeling desired behavior. Educators employ a number of exercise sheets and home activity sheets in order to convey and reinforce the concepts introduced in the discussions.

One of the researchers of this report observed a number of the sessions on "positive guidance" in the spring semester, 1979. The educator elicited from the mothers examples of discipline problems and techniques from mothers, who recounted numerous anecdotes from their own experience. The educator herself frequently cites incidents with her own children as examples. Notes taken at one of these sessions suggest some of the dynamics between mothers and educator as a consequence of the pedagogical techniques employed in the class:

> E. (the educator) has just gone on for a long time with her anecdote, a somewhat diffuse justification of points in the curriculum. She always uses the 'royal we,' even though it's not clear that she has consensus about any of her points. While this lecture is going on, the mothers adopt formal attention postures (as if listening to a church sermon). Many have one arm across their stomachs, propping up the elbow of the other arm, held up with hand on chin or finger across their lips. Some suggest bore-

dom by their poses and at least two let their eyes wander towards the outside window. The exception is S., whose frequent laugh responds to E.'s anecdote at different points.
After having initiated the class by eliciting examples and facilitating discussion around the basic concepts she wants to get across, she takes advantage of the cooperative atmosphere and launches into her own cautionary, illustrative speech. I think she loses a number of mothers as she goes on and on. Finally, a concrete example of something said yesterday, turns it into a hypothetical example, and opens the floor to more discussion.
E.: '...We have to look at why a child does certain things. Maybe your child is playing with the knobs on the TV and you can't get him to stop it, and you tell him and you tell him, what would you do?'

The group comes to life. One woman says something which provokes laughter. M. begins to speak, but A. speaks over her.

A: 'I ignore him.'

M. continues, explaining that she takes her child's hands off the knobs and hits them and says not to play with the TV and

M: '...she doesn't touch it no more. Not just words. She would just do it afterwards, however she likes, with just words.'
E: 'How many times did you have to hit her?'
M: 'But just on the hands. Three times.'
E: 'But on three different occasions?'
M: 'Yes.'
E: 'When they're about a year old, many times they don't understand and you can't reason with them and explain things to them. You may be able to tell them some things, but a lot of times they don't understand. Do you think at the age of two, they begin to understand more?'

Murmurs of agreement.

E: 'Would you do anything else to keep her from touching the knobs?' (Turning to another mother)
F: 'I would just talk to her, tell her not to touch the knobs.'
E: 'What do you think M. could have done to keep C. from touching the knobs?'

E.'s question implies that M. didn't do something right even though she solved the problem to her satisfaction.

V: 'Buy her one of those little ones that gives them something to do...'
E: (Amidst other voices) 'Okay, distraction...distract them with another toy, because children don't know why you don't want them to touch the knobs, it's a lot of fun to be turning those knobs, you know....'
S. laughs at this.
E: '...They're exploring, and they have no idea that they're going to mess up the TV. But all they know is that you're telling them no, you're being negative with them, so if you give them, as we suggested here, a different toy. You don't necessarily have to go out and buy a toy, but find something that...'
L: (Jumping in) 'An old radio.'
V: 'An old radio that doesn't work.'
E: 'So if you can't reason with a child, when the child doesn't understand, then you use...'
F: (Anticipating) 'Distraction.'
E: 'You have to change the situation...'

This excerpt illustrates two general points: on the one hand, it shows the interactional dynamics of a child development class; on the other hand, it suggests the way that the topic of discipline is treated in these classes. As Sutherland points out in the Final Report of the Multimedia Training Package Impact Study (p. 101-113), leaders in parent education workshops can choose between at least two roles, that of information-giver (a pedagogical leader) and that of group facilitator (a problem-solving leader). In the MCDP classes, leaders tend towards a pedagogical role as information-giver. This style does not preclude group discussions on child-rearing problems, but the problems as well as the solutions tend to be defined by the leader.

In the excerpt quoted above, E. recalls a concrete example of a discipline problem from the previous day's conversation and then rephrases the problem as a hypothetical question. She ignores responses that suggest it presents no major problem for most of the mothers in the group. She does reinforce selected responses, and then translates the concrete solutions to the problem offered by the participants into more abstract strategies of discipline advocated in the curriculum manual.

The pedagogical style of leadership in a parent education class implies that parents do not have adequate information or experience to contribute to a discussion of childrearing. This leadership style used in the MCDP belies affirmations by leaders of respect for mothers' own experiences. Moreover, it once again suspends the adult status of mothers and provides them with a transitional status of students, in a distinctly subservient status to teachers.

The excerpt quoted from the class also indicates a continuing theme in the discipline lessons--that spanking or hitting should be avoided, and that alternative techniques are available.

E., the educator in this session, was interviewed and thought that one of the major purposes of the program was to convey an alternative philosophy of discipline:

> Q: What do you think the program is trying to do for the student? The basic philosophy of the program overall?
>
> E: Overall we are training mothers to be better mothers so that they will learn to understand their children a little better. And we teach them that there are alternatives other than spanking their children to get them to do what is right or to get them to do what the mother wants them to do. That is the main goal because of the high degree of child abuse and... I don't mean just child abuse in hitting the kids, but abusing them verbally, abusing them in our actions, in our attitudes, many times by neglecting them.

Teaching

During the first half of the curriculum, "separation" constitutes the most significant organized set of events. The rest of the lessons during the first half-year are treated in group discussions and group activities. While mothers are called on to participate in discussions and exercises, they are not asked to enact a prescribed role with their children. In the second half of the year, acting in the role of a teacher constitutes for each mother a set of enactments ritually comparable to separation.

"Separation" changes mothers' status by ritually relieving them of their role as primary care-givers. It does not immediately afford them a new status. Through various enactments of the teaching role mothers acquire a new status, that of teacher of their child. The introductory lesson to this block of lessons on teaching is entitled "Introduction to microteaching." Microteaching is the label for videotaping staged interactions between mothers and children. While videotapes of mothers' and children's behavior had been made during earlier episodes for the purposes of evaluation of the program as well as for use in lessons on separation and role-playing discipline techniques, the mothers are only introduced to the videotape equipment and learn to explore its uses at this point in the curriculum. After being in front of the camera a number of times, mothers are encouraged to play with the equipment and understand what it feels like to be behind the camera. The objective of this exercise is to overcome self-consciousness of the mothers' being videotaped, to prepare them for the microteaching tape of themselves and their children, and to become aware of how the videotapes can be used to evaluate one's own behavior.

Ten minute interactions of mothers and their children are videotaped and are shown to each mother afterwards. With her permission, they are also shown to the other mothers. Discussion and evaluation of the tapes is governed by a rule which requires that other mothers only say positive comments about the mother-child interaction they watch. Finally, the educator probes for the participants' feelings about being videotaped.

After this rehearsal, the next videotape exercise has mothers practicing reinforcement techniques with their children. Reinforcement had been discussed previously as a discipline strategy. It is taken up in the microteaching session as a teaching strategy. Before the taping session, the educator tells the mothers:

> Today, in the videotaping session, you and your child will play together for about five minutes. Use as much reinforcement as you can to encourage your child to explore the toy, and learn from it. You may want to help him with some concepts, and use reinforcement such as praise, encouragement, smiles, and various kinds of positive attention. Choose a toy to use with your child. (Taken from the Curriculum Manual)

Following a lesson on self-concept, the curriculum focuses on teaching concepts of language development and techniques for increasing children's language development. Items discussed in this lesson include: 1) the nature of language and non-verbal communication, 2) the uses of language, 3) steps and rates in a child's development of language, 4) behavior of parents that affect a child's language development, and 5) techniques of vocabulary expansion, elaboration of speech, correction of speech, and recalling events and experiences.

Following this discussion, mothers are invited to observe teachers in the classroom and note conversations between them and the children in order to identify the techniques of expansion, elaboration, correction, and recalling events. Finally, each mother "microteaches" her child for the

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videotape, using language stimulation techniques.

The final teaching event staged in the program involves mothers participating with teachers in the children's classroom. They stay for the full morning in the classroom. The day they teach is the first time they stay in the children's classroom since the separation process at the beginning of the program. Pursuing the analysis of these events as ritual, it is the first time that mothers return to the ritual space of the classroom, but now with a changed status.

In the curriculum manual, the link between separation and teaching is delineated, as the educator is instructed to say:

> All of you were in the classroom with your child when we were working on the separation process. We have also observed the classroom, the children and teacher in other topics, so you know a lot about what happens there.

Preparing for this event, educators and mothers discuss feelings about being a teacher, getting over discomfort as a teacher, differences between microteaching and teaching a group of children, and teaching basics such as daily scheduling, lesson plans, and the role of a teacher. The day that mothers participate in the classroom, they leave approximately a half hour early in order to get debriefed by an educator and talk over their experience. Finally, mothers are asked to write up a summary of the day in the classroom. When scheduling permits, mothers are invited to teach a second day or plan an activity of their own to teach to children.

The final topics on teaching elaborate on concepts previously introduced: one goes back over how children learn with toys; another goes more deeply into language concepts; another discusses how children explore their world and learn to express themselves through art activities. These lessons are, in some sense, an aftermath to participation in the classroom.

Given the placement of this block of lessons on teaching at the end of the program as well as the amount of time devoted to them, it would seem that training the mother to be a teacher is the ultimate purpose of the program. This observation coincides with the goals of at least those who wrote the curriculum and set up the program. But, most staff members do not talk at length about this part of the program, just as they seemed to deemphasize the goal of academic achievement for the children, as mentioned earlier. Most staff members talked much more readily about separation, getting mothers to understand children, and teaching positive guidance techniques.

The reasons for this lack of emphasis on what seems designed to be the culminating set of activities of the program needs to be addressed. One clue to this apparent discrepancy is suggested by one of the educators interviewed:

> ...Some parents get the attitude that I am gonna go over there and learn about child development so I can go out and get a job. And we tell them, we're not here to train you so that you can go to work, we're here to train you so that you can handle your children with more ease, be more relaxed and enjoying your role as a mother, and uh, that's the whole thing.

Given the length of the program and the intense commitment it expects from the participating mothers, it should not be surprising that some of the women would like to cash in on their training. The lack of access to sufficient income and/or work is certainly one of the most difficult conditions that these mothers face. However, the program is not set up to provide participants with credentials and contacts that could be translated into work in teaching or child-care. In this sense, the program reinforces the role of Mexican-American women as unremunerated but overworked mothers.

Rather than teaching being seen as a skill to be used to promote her own status, it is simply another role that a mother is expected to play.

Another possible interpretation of the staff's deemphasis on teaching the mothers to be teachers is that they themselves may become threatened in their (paid) teacher role, should mothers take over fully in that role. This is not to suggest that staff members' jobs are in any way threatened, or that they perceive any threat. Rather, the differences that they see between themselves and the parents are such that they may find it hard to envision their students taking on a similar role.

While this interpretation suggests the self-interest of the staff in deemphasizing teaching skills, one can also argue that the staff, being closer to the mothers than the program designers, choose to emphasize lessons that may be closer to the mothers' own expressed needs. In so doing, they modify the goal of the program in line with a more accurate assessment of what is needed by the participants in their role of mothers.

These interpretations of staff intent are pieced together from interviews and observation, but none can be firmly sustained by direct confirmation from the staff themselves.

Home Management Curriculum

The home management curriculum consists primarily of nutrition and sewing classes. In both these classes, there appeared to be no set or rigid sequence of lessons. Staff members had considerably more flexibility in developing these classes. The staff who taught these classes were not expected to undergo intensive training as were the classroom teachers and the parent educators. The model for the program did not specify in any great detail what was expected to happen in these classes.

These classes were considered secondary by administrators of the program and parent educators, but they were not so secondary as to escape attention. In fact, comments by staff suggested ambivalent feelings about the sewing classes, as if these classes represented a threatening alternative to classes on child development. The director tried to make sure that mothers were not sewing anything that they could personally use, but rather that they sew items of clothing for the children and/or toys and decorations for the center. A parent educator worried that sewing class attracted mothers away from attending to separation procedures. On the other hand, the in-center supervisor thought that women gained more self-esteem and confidence from the sewing class than from many of the other classes.

Observers noted that mothers seemed to enjoy sewing class. What appeared to make sewing class different from other classes was that it was not structured by pedagogical and controlling relationships between staff and parents. As such, it allowed mothers an autonomy and flexibility in creating their own structure of work. Women could socialize while sewing or choose to work independently from the group. At the same time, sewing was a practical activity, which some women already had expertise in, and others could learn from watching. As an alternative activity to the child development activities, it undercut the kind of control that parent educators had during other times. As such, it was threatening to them. At the same time, at least some of these educators approved of the class because they thought it provided an activity in which mothers could gain self-esteem.

Nutrition class, when it occurred, usually adopted a pedagogical structure similar to child development classes. The class focused on nutritional requirements, food preparation, and family menus.

Gaps in Curriculum

What is left out of the curriculum at the MCDP is perhaps as important for a complete description and analysis of the parent education curriculum as what is included, particularly if the excluded areas are mentioned as intentionally beyond the scope of the program.

One set of activities excluded from the curriculum during the period in which this ethnographic inquiry was conducted were activities which had been part of the curriculum in previous years, but which were dispensed with when funding cutbacks necessitated. The main activity excluded from the curriculum for this reason was the oral English class. The director made the decision not to replace the English teacher. Nevertheless, he hoped to secure the services of an English teacher either as a volunteer or through an arrangement with another local institution. This plan was never carried out during the year that FACS' researchers visited the center. Dispensing with English classes was a significant decision indicating the priorities of the program, as defined by administrators. For Spanish-dominant women who could not converse easily in English, these classes taught a skill that could significantly enhance their ability to operate in the world of Anglo institutions, including schools, jobs, and government agencies. The main benefit of such classes would accrue to the mothers themselves, rather than to their children or their families. Given the child-oriented ideology of the program, this class was the first to go when cutbacks were necessary.

A second activity, left out as a result of the program suspension, was instruction in passing the written test for securing a driver's license. This instruction was postponed both in the fall and in the spring semesters and did not occur while this team of researchers visited the center. This instruction was also apparently dispensable, and most likely for the same reason. A benefit accruing most directly to the mother was considered of secondary importance to the goals of the program.

While the above activities were once a part of the program, other activities are intentionally excluded because they are considered not in line with the purposes of the program. The deemphasis on potential skills related to employment has already been mentioned. A second area of interest to participants that the program is reluctant to discuss is differences that participants may be having with their spouses. Family workshops held during the first year of the program do include the father, and problems of family communication are addressed in one of these sessions. During the second year, fathers are invited to monthly weeknight meetings covering a variety of topics on family life and childrearing. These two parts of the program which include the father seek his support for his wife's involvement. But in the day to day curriculum, the premise is that husbands are not involved in childrearing to any great extent, and that only mothers need the information offered by the program. Furthermore, discussing with mothers the marital relationship or problems arising from it, whether or not they affect childrearing, is considered beyond the scope of everyday discussion. Nor are the problems facing single mothers dealt with. The in-center supervisor explains how she deals with personal problems brought to her by participants:

> If it's a marital problem, I will try and first of all find whether it's going to affect her participation here or the child in the classroom. And if it doesn't, then I will usually say to the mother, 'Mrs. So and So, you need to maybe talk to your husband again or try to take care of these problems...and I hope you can work this out,' without making myself sound like I don't really want to hear it. But when I hear that it's a personal problem with a husband or something, and it's not really going

> to affect the child or the mother too much directly here, I will always still tell S. (the social worker). S. is the one who has the background in psychology and I don't want to take a wrong step with a mother, because I could give her my personal opinion and that would just be my personal opinion, but that would not be so good for the mother. I will try to give her a little moral support and that's about it.

This reluctance to discuss marital relationships when they surface in the program is attributed to a lack of expertise. This staff member implies that that information and philosophy concerning the parent-child relationship is proper discourse for the program, but that a similar body of information and philosophy is either not available for solving marital problems, or is hidden in some branch of psychology with which she is unfamiliar. While personal counseling may well be the proper role for a social worker in this situation, discussing generic problems encountered in marital relationships would not necessarily be out of place.

One observer noted an incident in field notes, suggesting the taboo on discussing marital negotiations of fathers' roles. In one child development class, a mother commented that fathers needed classes on child development, too. Her husband really didn't understand her difficulties with disciplining her children. This comment brought a round of laughter from the group, in which the educator laughed the loudest. The issue struck home for a lot of the participants, but it was not considered a serious topic for discussion, at least in the setting of the child development class.

Marital relationships in the Mexican-American family and the role of the father in rearing children are touchy subjects among the people served by the program. The avoidance of this area is understandable, yet it tends to reinforce a traditional role of the Mexican-American woman as sole caretaker. While the inclusion of fathers in some aspect of the programs is an attempt to broach a change in family relations, the program is reluctant to move very far in this direction.

7. Recruitment of Participants

The process of identifying, selecting and committing parents to participate in the Mother Child Development Program is an elaborate series of steps designed to insure certain homogeneity of the participating children and their families. We will describe the process first as it is described by the staff and then from the perspective of the mothers who were actually chosen.

Recruitment of parents to the program involves a series of personal contacts by staff with mothers in their homes. During the initial survey of the zip-code area, recruiters mention the program and the possibility of participation if families have small children, and meet other eligibility criteria. After the survey, the social services coordinator determines which families are eligible for participation. She then returns to these families' homes one or more times for "invitation visits." During these visits, she explains the two-year design of the program, the various educational, social and medical services which the family can receive should they choose to participate, and the "lottery" whereby families willing to participate are designated either experimental or control group. If a commitment from the mother is secured, then her family is randomly assigned to one of the two groups.

Following an invitation visit, interested families are visited three times by an evaluator to collect data on the families. Following those visits, the medical coordinator goes to see the family to collect a health history. Finally, the associate director returns to make "notification visits" to those in the experimental group. The associate director elaborated

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briefly on what the notification visit consists of:

> So when a family is notified, officially notified, that they fell into the program group, I do that. I go out to the home and talk to them about what their responsibility is during the program and what our responsibility is to them and so on and so forth. Explain a little bit further what will be happening to them in the long range and then also, in the immediate future, who's going to be their next contact person, and so on.

By the time of the notification visit, four or five different people will already have visited the family concerning the program. Finally, the program begins with the arrival of the in-home educator.

Prior to September, 1978, an additional incentive was offered to women to commit themselves to the full two year cycle of the program. Once they made it through the first year, they were offered a three-dollar stipend for every day they attended classes at the center. Some mothers, who had to make use of the sibling room, were charged a dollar per day for each child, so part of the stipend was used for day care. Both staff and mothers commented that the monetary incentive was useful to motivate mothers at the beginning of the program, but other motivations took precedence once a mother had been involved in the program for awhile. With cutbacks of funds in September, 1978, both stipends and day-care charges for sibling care were done away with. Most of the mothers interviewed had been recruited when the policy on stipends was still in effect, but few mentioned it as a factor when recalling the way they were recruited and the reasons they decided to participate.

While families selected for participation in the educational component of the program are being notified by the associate director, the social services coordinator returns to those families assigned to the control group to explain that they will not be able to participate in the educational program, but tries to secure their cooperation for the necessary visits by the evaluator to collect data. At the same time she stresses the social and medical services still available to them through the program. This visit is a difficult one for the social services coordinator to make:

> One of my responsibilities that I had not mentioned before is that I do notify those families who are assigned to a control group. And I run into a lot of disappointments and good families who I would say would be people who would be very interested in the program who can not be in the program because the coin flipped to the wrong side and for me personally, it's very hard to deal with because I feel the program should be available to anybody who wants to do it.

Access to the MCDP was considered by the mothers interviewed to be a matter of luck, of arbitrary qualifications, of merit, or of some combination of these three. Although some women had been looking for a program that would help their preschool children or themselves, they accurately perceived their enrollment in the program had not depended any on their own individual initiative. One participant had tried to enroll in another program similar to the MCDP, but had not followed through. When the recruiter from MCDP came to her door she was surprised she had not heard about the program:

> I was stunned about it when I heard about this program, when they went and told me about it at home. I said well I haven't read it nowhere. I read the paper...I said I do read things that I see interest me. But I never did read it somewhere else or in books or nothing.

Since getting into the program had not depended on individual initiative, but mere acquiescence, this woman speculated on how it had happened.

> I don't know where they got our names from, or Martin's name. I think from the hospital.... And I said of all the children or the mothers that had babies at that time, I said, what a coincidence.

The notion that an element of chance surrounded participation in the program was reinforced by perceptions of the eligibility requirements and by the "drawing" of names of applicants to be in the experimental or control group. One woman explained how luck and qualifications for the program were intertwined:

> A: ...They took a census, and then when they were finished they told me about the program. They said they would come to my house and have an interview with me to see if we qualified. And *I kept my fingers crossed* so that I could qualify.
>
> Q: What were the qualifications?
>
> A: Well, I'm not exactly sure, but something to do with income. They had to be people from a low income.... I didn't understand it very well, but they told us that children were *to be selected by chance*, *like tossing a coin*, *heads or tails*. And also I think they had to be born in a certain month.

Other women saw the selection process based less on chance and more on some screening process carried out by the staff. These women likened the recruitment interviews and forms to entrance examinations, as in the following recollection:

> There were girls writing, taking applications and they were telling me that it was for a school when we had our baby.... So to myself I thought, well, they told me it wouldn't harm you, you know. They would let me know if I would *pass* or not.... So the months passed and all that, and I had Cristina. And all of a sudden, they told me that *I passed*. I was *approved* for this school. When I was pregnant at first I said, maybe they won't come. It wouldn't hurt me to make all that. I might as well do it. That's what I was thinking through the inside of my mind. So when they never showed up or anything, I said, well, I think they forgot. All of a sudden they told me that Carmen had been *approved* and they wanted me to take her.

This woman not only perceived that she was being "approved" but also that she had to "approve" of the program by evaluating any possible danger it might pose. The offer of a stipend and reassurances from the recruiters helped overcome any fear she might have had. She was nevertheless skeptical that the program would not come through and that recruiters would not return.

Another woman perceived a risk during the recruitment process for a different reason.

> A: They used to come over to the house and ask if there were any two-year-olds. And back then I wasn't sure yet. So I would tell them, yes there is, but I didn't want to get involved. And then my father used to take him a lot walking. So they saw him and they found out where we lived and they went back again. So that's when I said okay and it's when I started.
>
> Q: Why were you not sure that you wanted to come?
>
> A: Because I'm living with my mother and it's not stated in the contract of the housing authority.
>
> Q: So you thought that if you...
>
> A: Would get involved, they would find out over there.
>
> Q: Then why did you decide to participate?
>
> A: After they told me that they had nothing to do with anybody else. That it was just confidential, just here. And they wouldn't go out to anyone. And that's when I said okay.

During recruitment, women felt that they had to overcome fears or skepticism about the program or had to await determinations by chance and/or program personnel before they could participate. In either case, recruitment into the program was clearly perceived as something they had little control over, except to refuse. Since this team of researchers did not interview any people who refused, reasons for refusal are not known. Extrapolating from the testimonies above, the lack of control or personal initiative felt by women during the recruitment process may be one significant reason for refusal.

B. The Participants

1. Staff

A considerable number of people work for the Mother Child Development Program. A precise listing of all the positions is difficult, since there was considerable turnover as a result of the funding crisis of the program. Positions were changed or abolished over the course of the year, and CETA workers, work-study college students, and part-time workers augmented the regular staff. When functioning as planned, the program included:

a. Program Director

b. Associate Director

c. In-Center Supervisor

d. Parent Educators

e. Home Management Teacher

f. Sewing Teacher

g. Preschool Classroom Teachers and Aides

h. In-Home Educators

i. Social Services Coordinator

j. Medical Coordinator

k. Evaluator

l. Miscellaneous supporting staff, including secretaries, accountant (part-time), cook, groundskeeper, drivers for the vans and child care worker for the sibling room. Work-study and CETA workers periodically helped the Social Services Coordinator and other staff.

The staff had been even larger in previous years, including an English teacher and a recruiter.

All the staff members who had direct contact with the mothers were interviewed.

The staff of the MCDP, all but one Mexican-American, are a group of deeply caring and concerned people. Their daily interactions with the parents and the trust in them that most of the participants expressed are indicators of their good intentions. During the period of suspension of the program, most of the staff who were laid-off continued to keep in contact with each other and with the mothers, although at times the prospects for renewal of activities looked very dim.

Individual and collective devotion to their work, however, has to be placed in the context of the model of parent education that they implement. The staff was trained and socialized for their role with classes, workshops, and visits to the original program and direct contact with their counterparts there. Before they start working, they assimilated the curriculum and showed that they understood the interrelationships between each component; they had to understand the totality of the program they were trusted with implementing.

Here, we will summarize some of the staff perceptions of participating mothers that appear in various parts of the interviews.

Staff members seemed to have arrived at a near unanimous consensus that mothers lack a number of important elements for being good parents. The staff interviewed seemed to operate with a deficit theory of the parents served by the program. Various staff identified the deficiencies as poverty, cultural constraints, poor budgeting, no ambition, lack of skills, lack of education, lack of standards of cleanliness, poor marital relationships, chronic family problems, and child neglect. Only the medical coordinator avoided these negative assessments, exclaiming that "we have great mothers, they are very cooperative and very helpful."

When asked what are the biggest problems facing parents in their lives, one of the parent educators responded in this way:

> Just looking at the group in general, they're so limited in their knowledge. They're ignorant about a lot of things, but it's because they haven't had that push, that encouragement from other people that mean something to them, like for example myself, my father. The mothers don't have the ego support of the father to say hey, honey, I'm glad you're going to the school. With some of them, it's a struggle. I see these mothers facing something that comes from the barrio, the machismo, the macho image or something. I don't know why their husbands are like that. They're hard-working, but they have lowly types of jobs, garbage collector, construction work, maybe some of them aren't even working. And money's a problem. But the mothers, I see them having a difficult time getting any type of ego support. And maybe the men don't have the ego support, either. And they're so ignorant about so many things that they can get and that they can have. And the knowledge, you know, they don't want to try, but others are just--satisfied where they're at, and they're going to accept it.

For this woman, lack of ego support is both consequence and cause of ignorance. And both of these deficits lead to lack of ambition. Another parent educator cites a number of conditions which hinder mothers, a list which appears to be a fairly accurate picture of problems faced by low income groups in America.

> They have many strikes against them: poverty for one, even though they might be on welfare and are getting some help, but still it's not enough. And a lack of education, of course, that is a big problem, many are high school dropouts; lack of knowing English language does hinder them to a certain extent because their children start school and they don't know the language and their mothers may not know how to read so they can't help their children in the education area; they are faced with too many children, some of them; and also, one parent homes where they don't have husbands. So they have many problems to begin with and one problem leads to another.

This passage cites objective conditions constraining the mothers in the program. Lack of income and education are conditions recognized by many mothers themselves. However, similar to other staff members, this person seems to exaggerate the language problem, since the great majority of mothers interviewed during the course of this study were quite competent in English. Only three mothers interviewed had more than three children. And "single parent homes" is an inaccurate statement since all but one of the single mothers lived with their own parents. The string of conditions begins to sound like a statement of the staff member's own criteria for an abstract definition of poverty. She continues her assessment of parents by suggesting poor budgeting as a reason for some financial problems:

> What little money they get, they spend it going to the corner store to buy soda pop and they can't go a long distance to a larger store where they can get bargains.... And also they don't learn how to save money and learning how to buy... maybe they waste on a petty thing like paper towels or maybe detergent or any little thing because the don't know how to economize.

One of the administrators suggests some of the effects on children of the "ignorance" of the parents.

> The kids' teeth are ruined, even before they go to first grade. So the parents are very ignorant about what they're doing to their children. The type of food that they give them, it's very fattening. And a lot of our mothers also, you know, they know that they're supposed to be models for their kids and so forth, and yet, when they sit down to eat here, they eat like they haven't eaten all week.... Some of these parents, their homes are a mess. They don't realize that that causes infection in the children and it causes them to get ill and on the food. But you'd be surprised by the way some of these mothers keep their homes. And they need more training as to the importance of cleanliness, not only of their homes but themselves, their bodies, their personal hygiene.

While the premise of deficit underlay many staff persons' perceptions of parents' lives, the staff also felt the need to overcome this premise in their interaction with parents. Administrators emphasized the importance of respecting the mothers who participated in the program. They saw the program as providing "alternatives" to the parents and staff "sharing" with mothers available information on childrearing, rather than telling mothers what "the best way to do it" is. In fact, the administrators thought that parents did not take an assertive enough role in challenging the ideas they received in the program. These administrators thought that sometimes the mothers held program staff in too much awe.

Parent educators, on the other hand, had more immediate contact with parents. They were much more apt to find themselves in an adversary relationship with mothers, asserting values and techniques from the program and risking the resentment of mothers for interfering too much in their lives. The parent educators were more apt to say that they had to "get down to the level" of parents in order to convey the messages of the program.

All staff members tried to maintain a proper distance implied by the deficit assumption underlying the program's purpose, and at the same time, deny that they were assuming positions of authority and control over the mothers.

2. Characteristics of Parents

a. Eligibility Requirements

The Mother-Child Development Program is highly restrictive in the selection of families for participation. Research considerations require that families meet the following criteria in order to be selected for participation in the program: 1) the child must have been born within one of two five-month periods of time in any given year; 2) the family income must not exceed specified guidelines; 3) mother and child must be in good health and have no special handicaps; 4) family must live within the zip code area where the center is located. These criteria are never waived. In addition, two other criteria appear in some documents: 5) the parents' education must not exceed high school; and 6) the mother must not work.

The social services coordinator indicated that the fifth criterion was usually followed due to research constraints. We uncovered only one case in which a participant had begun college after enrolling in the program. She had done so after generous encouragement on the part of some staff people. The sixth criterion was applied only if women's work interfered with their attendance at the center. A number of women held jobs at other times of the day. However, the recruiters did emphasize the nature of the two year program commitment expected of the mothers and the consequent constraint that would place on the hours they would have available for other work. One criterion was so taken for granted that it remained implicit: families were Mexican or Mexican-American. Given the zip code area served by the program, it was unlikely that any other ethnic groups would be represented. Nevertheless, one participant had an Anglo surname due to her former marriage. She spoke almost no Spanish. At the other extreme, a mother recently arrived from Nuevo Laredo spoke no English. Thus, the ethnic criterion implied little homogeneity beyond a felt ethnic identity.

The social services coordinator further mentioned that she tried to recruit roughly even numbers of mothers receiving welfare and mothers who weren't on welfare. This distinction usually corresponded to women without husbands and women living with their husbands, according to the social worker.

Though no single criterion is particularly restrictive, the sum total clearly made it difficult finding appropriate candidates for the program. Surveys of the public housing projects and local neighborhoods was the first step in contacting potential recruits. A work-study recruiter estimated that a total of 600-700 families needed to be contacted in order to find enough families to participate in both experimental and/or control groups who 1) met the criterion and 2) wanted to participate. At the time she said this, somewhere between twenty-two and twenty-five families participated regularly in the in-center phase, somewhat more in the in-home phase, and an equal number were supposed to be designated the control group.

b. Number of Participating Parents

During the period of time that this study was conducted, figures on enrollment often changed. In September, 1978, the program attempted to increase the numbers served in both phases of the program, in order to counter criticisms of too high staff-client ratio and attract alternative funding sources. They therefore set themselves the goal of serving between forty and forty-five families in the in-center phase, and recruiting an equal number to the in-home phase. Apparently not enough families completed the first year and wanted to continue into the second year in order to meet the goal set for the in-center phase of the program. By October, twenty-two families were enrolled in-center, and daily attendance averaged fifteen mothers and children. Recruitment for the in-home phase continued in the early fall and no firm figures on participants in the in-home phase were collected by the research team. Supposedly, an equal number of families were enrolled in the control groups corresponding to in-center and in-home experimental groups, though staff members admitted that attrition rates in the control groups were high.

When operations were suspended in November and reinitiated in February, one wave of mothers were prematurely graduated, another group was promoted to the in-center phase, and several families dropped out of the program all together. Due to new funding requirements, referrals of welfare families were accepted without their participation in all phases of the program and without matching control families being selected. The net result of these various changes was an increase in numbers of families enrolled and in average daily in-center attendance, approximating more closely the targeted figures. Average daily attendance during this time was twenty-five mothers and children.

c. Demographic Characteristics

In October, 1978, demographic data on mothers participating in the in-home phase of the program was collected in order to determine some general characteristics of the population of mothers in the program. Sixteen participants provided information on their ages, numbers of children, marital status, place of birth, and employment. The age of women in the program ranged from eighteen years to thirty-four years, averaging twenty-five and a half. Most of the women had two or three children. Ten women (63%) were married and living with their husbands while six (37%) were either separated or single. Of the latter, only one woman lived alone with her children while the others lived with their own parents. Eleven women (70%) were born and raised in San Antonio, three (18%) had migrated in the last three years from northern Mexico, while two were born into families pursuing agricultural work and had lived most of their lives in rural America. Several of those women, who had grown up in San Antonio, had left and migrated in search of work to other parts of the country before returning to San Antonio. The large majority did not work, but three participants worked part-time when not attending program activities.

C. Parental Concerns

1. Motivation to Participate

All the women interviewed decided to participate when the program offered them the opportunity. Some respondents seemed to adopt a "why not" attitude:

> Q: Why did you decide to participate in the program?
>
> A: Well, I was sitting there, I didn't know what to do. And I thought, well, I can't lose nothing by going. So I tried it.

Most women, however, indicated that they decided to participate because their children would benefit from the program. They wanted their children to be able to play with other children, have more toys and materials, and begin to learn at an early age. Some indicated they wanted their child to get a head start on formal schooling. For example:

> Q: What made you decide to join the program?
>
> A: Well, I liked it because they said my son would learn many things, like colors and well, other things. He would learn to recognize his name when it is written and he would learn how to socialize with other children, to share. Because in my house, he was the only one, so I thought it would be good for him to be with other children. I wanted him to have playmates and learn how to share and play with others.

Associated with this motivation, some women said they wanted to learn more themselves on how to raise their children, as in the following comments:

> I'm interested in my child and getting more knowledge.

and:

> Because I do like to participate. For the benefit of the boys or like now for the [little boy].... I said I would like that a little bit more....

and:

> Getting to learn how to show him books...having classes in child development...to bring him up in a better way, I guess.

For virtually every woman interviewed, the primary motivation, then, was expected benefits for their children, either by direct contact with the program or indirectly through the skills developed by the mother to better raise her children.

A minority of the women interviewed found secondary motivation in benefits they could receive for themselves, as in this comment:

> I liked everything (that she said we would have). I liked about the child, that he would develop, and I liked the English. I thought, good, I'm going to learn English.... And I asked them about the driving classes and she said, well, that will be when you go to the center regularly. And things about nutrition that I didn't know.

2. Special Themes

a. "Finishing School" and Getting "A Good Education"

When asked what they wanted for their children when they grew up, eight out of ten respondents replied that they wanted their children to "finish school" go to get "a good education." While these responses suggest a strong cultural value placed on education, the meaning of education varied somewhat among the mothers. Most of the mothers who used the phrase "finish school," and "go to college" linked these aspirations to pragmatic considerations of their children getting professional or white collar jobs when they grow up. This meaning of education is typified in the following two responses:

> Q: What do you want for your children when they grow up?
>
> A: I hope that they go to school and finish up and that they won't have to struggle. I say, 'Son, it's real good to go on to college. You can get an easier job,

> something like typing. Not something hard like your father. Your father never went to school, and that's why a lot of times he doesn't have work.' I know that sometimes he worries about what he's going to do. When work dries up, it's hard since I don't work either. So I say, 'I hope you don't have to become like the men who work in the streets digging ditches.' And I take them out and show them so that he sees what I'm talking about. And I point out how they sweat and how hot it is during the summer. You can get sick under such a sun, or you can fall off one of the buildings. That happens a lot too. And for that reason, work inside is better. And then he gets quiet, and he says, 'Yes, I think I'll go. I think I'd like to be a doctor.' And I say, 'That's very good.' They make a lot of money. And (my other son) says, 'I want to be a policeman.'

Another mother said:

> What I want for my boys, at least for them to finish school and to get ahead, not being suffering in the world like I did with M's father...it's a very painful life of being, worrying about life ahead. Now I'm pretty at ease right now, so that's what I want for my boys. At least for them to learn cause they'll be needing it.... I just got through the eleventh grade and now sometimes I know that I needed my education. But now I have my boys.

These women and others like them in the program did not finish high school. Some of them lack confidence in their own literacy or cannot read and write at all. They see their husband's and their own incomplete education as a main obstacle to making life easier for themselves and their families. Schooling is seen as the primary means for their children to escape from the "struggle" and overcome their class position. "Finishing up" school is proof of upward mobility.

A second group of mothers did not elaborate so much on the virtues and rewards of schooling. They answered the interviewer's question with a succinct reference to wanting "a good education" for their children, and then went on to personal qualities they wanted their children to develop rather than social positions or economic success they hoped their children could achieve. Note the different emphasis in the following quotation:

> Q: What do you want for your children when they grow up?
>
> A: I would like a good education, and that they have the best life that they could. That's why I tell them that good manners and good habits will never disappear when they grow up. So that they can do for themselves. They can be self-sufficient. That's what I would like. And above every thing, that they have good health.

For this woman and others like her, "a good education" is only one of a number of aspirations for her children, such as "good manners," "self-sufficiency," and "good health," These women do not link up schooling to specific achievements or give it primacy as a goal, but rather see it as part of a child's overall development. The aspect of their lives which seems to distinguish them from the first group of women is that they do not regret failing to complete school. Some of them finished high school. Others attended school in Mexico before coming to the states. Though this group of women is heterogeneous, ranging from the most Anglo-assimilated to the most monolingual Spanish-speaking women, they do not see the lack of schooling as an obstacle in their own lives, nor do they see it as the single most important means for their children to lead happy, productive lives. This finding is particularly significant in light of the fact that the immigrants from Mexico had no more schooling than many of the Mexican-American women. The difference may be that Mexican women do not perceive or do not accept the proposition that class position is solely determined by schooling. Mexican-American women lacking a complete American high school education do seem to accept this proposition.

b. "Respect"

Schooling is the main arena in which a child encounters an impersonal social world. Parental values concerning education shape that encounter. "Respect" is the key concept governing intra-familial relationships and relations with friendly others, in Mexican-American culture. Varied definitions of respect offered by the women interviewed suggest that the concept is undergoing reevaluation and change at least among some of the women. When asked what were the most important things that children learned from their parents, the first word to come to mind to five of the mothers was "respect." Other mothers indicated the same concept in different ways, while only one mother suggested a somewhat different value. She wanted her children to learn "responsibility" from her.

What is meant by respect? Traditionally, "respect" encodes the rights and obligations governing relationships between the old and the young. Children should respect their elders. Informants mentioned two concrete ways in which children traditionally showed respect: 1) by being "seated" and "quiet" in front of their elders, and 2) by not saying "bad words" in front of their elders. These two examples suggest a system of hierarchical communication in the traditional Mexican or Mexican-American family. Children must refrain from certain kinds of communication with their parents and with other older people. This system of communication extends itself to the sibling set, with a hierarchical ranking of siblings according to age.

While some of the women interviewed in San Antonio affirmed this value without qualification, others entertained a potentially contrasting value. They wanted their children to assert themselves and express their point of view, and they thought that parents should listen to their children. The following quotations represent a spectrum of valued behaviors for children, ranging from a traditional interpretation of respect to a critique of respect. One of the more traditional interpretations of "respect" was:

> The most important thing that children need to learn from their parents is respect, respect for people, for their parents, for their grandparents, for older people. I always tell them this. You have to respect other people. Like it used to be, a child would arrive at a house, and they would kiss the hand of the grandfather or the grandmother. That was what we were accustomed to. I say, now you do not want to do that...but I don't like a bad-mannered child.

While upholding the value of respect, another woman suggests some modifications in order to achieve a "balance" between tradition and change:

> Q: What are some of the things that you learned from your parents that you would like to pass on to your children?
>
> A: Well, respecting your elders and other people. Well, right now my children are very young, but I would like it that when we go to somebody else's house, and if everybody is seated, they'd be seated and be quiet, too. Well, basically how to behave themselves. I would like to see a little balance between how things were in the old days and how things are now.
>
> ...(My husband and I) don't want our children to suffer through some of the things we did. I mean, we both suffered from not being able to have someone to speak confidently with.
>
> ...I want my children to be able to have confidence and speak with my husband and I. Not like in the old days when you didn't talk about anything intimate or private like sex....

Another woman refers to the traditional value in passing but chooses to emphasize the value of children expressing themselves:

> Q: What do you think are the most important things that children should learn from their parents?
>
> A: Respect and good manners, and also to be neat and clean and not offend people. And also to be able to

> give their point of view or whenever there's something wrong that they can talk, that they know how to understand other people. I think, because there are many times that you are wrong because you don't listen to children, you don't let them talk. And they should be able to say, let me talk.

At least one mother recognized the contradiction between wanting children to be respectful, well-mannered and inoffensive and wanting them to be talkative and assertive:

> I was always taught to accept what they told me, and we would not be allowed to talk back, respect our elders, you know. And if you're going to say something, say it in, don't be rude, in other words...I wouldn't talk back, and they do (her children). But you can't take it as talking back. You have to take it as they are letting you know how they feel, so that they won't keep that inside them, you know. As I say, sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad.

It should be noted that the two Mexican women held much less traditional definitions of "respect" than many women who had grown up in San Antonio, spoke English fluently, and were more assimilated to Anglo culture.

Looking at variations in these first two socialization values, mothers who spoke at length of the importance of schooling for their children's future success, said very little about "respect" except to affirm the traditional value as a given. Mothers who only mentioned education in passing had much more to say about "respect." They critically evaluated "respect" and were open to changing the hierarchical communication patterns implied in the traditional concept. They were emphatic about treating their children equally regardless of age.

It may be useful at this point in the discussion to attempt to tie these first two variables together. Mothers who want their children to "finish school" and get good jobs, also tend to uphold the traditional value of "respect" within the family. Mothers who see education as one of several important socialization processes, hold a less traditional value of "respect." This second group of mothers is willing to listen more to their children, and express a more egalitarian ideal in parent-child and in sibling relationships.

In a limited sample of respondents, no conclusive generalizations can be made, but it is worthwhile to suggest some of the reasons that may be behind the different attitudes expressed by the mothers in the program. Mothers who take for granted or hold to the traditional value of respect were born, raised, and now live in the barrio of San Antonio. All of them express anxiety about potential danger their children may be exposed to in the neighborhood, citing the dangers of "spray-guys" "glue-sniffers," "marijuanos," and fast cars. They also see finishing school as one of the only ways their children can escape their class position. They are aware of how difficult it is to find work in urban America. Their values suggest a conservative survival strategy in the face of a situation about which they hold few illusions.

With one exception, the mothers who are reevaluating the concept of respect have moved to San Antonio, either from Mexico or from another more rural location in South Texas. They tend to be less afraid of the urban environment than those women who grew up in San Antonio. Migration to San Antonio indicates more mobility on the part of these women and their families. Whether the migration results in a new class position is unclear, but their experience suggests that school is not the only way to change their lives.

c. "Don't leave them with strangers."

The socialization values associated with education and respect govern the relationship which children are supposed to have with society and with family. Another ideal governs the role that mothers are supposed to play. That ideal was frequently expressed by mothers who claimed that they would not leave their children with mere "friends" or with "strangers." They would only leave them with their husbands or with close family members. When mothers, sisters or mothers-in-law were close and willing, they occasionally provided child-care. In three cases, single mothers lived in their parents' homes and regularly left their children with other household members. Women living in nuclear households felt compelled to keep their children with them at all times, wherever they went. The following quotations illustrate the responsibility associated with motherhood among this group of mothers, as well as the feelings of stress that it evokes.

> My mother said that she used to leave us, when she used to work, with this lady, only a friend of hers. And I don't. Every time that I have to go out, I don't leave them with any friends. I have to leave them with my parents or with my family, as long as I know it's my family, I'll leave them.
>
> We got out a lot more with my parents than (my children) do with us. Because my husband is into music and he goes off a lot on weekends to play with the band. Most of the time we get to stay home. I don't leave them with strangers. I leave them with their grandparents or somebody near that I'm accustomed to.
>
> I do get bored being in the house all the time. I would like to work part-time or something. But I really don't want to leave my children. They're too young. I would like to work. But my husband won't let me. My husband says when the children are all in school, then I can go and work if I like. My husband says when he was little, his parents went off to work and they would leave him. And sometimes he just had to hang out at the little grocery store nearby his house. He thought that was very bad. He doesn't want the children to have to go through that.
>
> There just isn't enough time for everything. Since my boys are all very attached to me, all three of them. When they were little, especially. Now that they're older, not quite so much. But with M. and R. I always had to fight with them that they stay with anybody. They just never wanted to stay

> with anybody. And the little one is the same way, now. He just doesn't want to stay with anybody, not even his grandmother. So I can't do without them. They're always with me.

Most of the mothers interviewed felt that they should stay with their children virtually all the time, unless a close relative or husband could take care of their children. At least two single mothers felt extremely threatened by losing control of their children, or being accused of neglecting them, because estranged husbands were trying to gain custody of the children. They also experienced substantial conflict with other relatives in the same household. On the other hand, women in nuclear families who were experiencing marital stress, usually due to husband's working away from home for significant periods of time, expressed the greatest need to find time for themselves away from the children.

In families where husbands were more supportive, the mothers did not express as great a need to get away from their children. But even in these cases, the acceptance of full-time responsibility for children contrasted with wistful longings to be able to go out to dances or parties like they did before they had children. Most of these women, however, did not want to seek work outside the house and felt better about being full-time mothers than about the prospect of working unskilled jobs.

3. Case Examples of Participants

The family circumstances and special concerns of participants in the MCDP provide some understanding for how they experienced and evaluated the program. Four examples of differing program experiences along with corresponding concerns and family circumstances are presented in this section of the case study. These case examples of participants are designed to highlight the interconnections between participants' lives before and outside the program and their experience at the Center. After these case examples, readers will better understand the impact of the program on different participants.

a. An Example of Extensive Reorientation

Rafaela, twenty-seven years old, is married with two children, a three-year-old son and a two-year-old daughter. She grew up in a small town about sixty miles from San Antonio and she moved into the city when she was in her early twenties. Growing up in a large family, Rafaela felt neglected as a child. She does not criticize her parents for being too authoritarian, but simply that they had no time for every one of their children.

> I know we didn't get that much special treatment...you may imagine with sixteen kids. I guess my mother was just, she barely had time to fix us what to eat and whatever work she had to do around the house to keep us, well, not clean because we didn't have that many clothes or anything, but just to keep us going. By the time you got them all fed, she didn't have time to worry about whether you fell down or if your brother is fighting with you. Now that I've got two kids, I've got more than enough time to hear their problems out, but I don't remember having my mother sit down and listen to my problems or nobody's problems.

Rafaela hopes that her children go to college, because she regrets her own lack of education. Consequently, her main concern is not how to discipline her preschool children, but rather how to cope with their future schooling.

> I'm scared about when they are enrolled in school. If they have some kind of problem and are not learning, what am I going to do about it? I know some kids that are going to school that don't know anything. They're in the second and third grade, they belong to some friends of mine. I ask them to spell "man" or simple little words, and they don't know how. So I don't know if it's the school or the parents or what it is. I just wonder about it with my kids, if they have the same problems. Because I'm not going to know everything that goes on in school. It's getting different. It's already different than when I was in school.

Classes in the MCDP on language acquisition are especially important for Rafaela. She recalls that before she started in the program, she was living in isolation with her first born.

> I guess that's one of the reasons he never learned to talk. That's what I said that night when you were there about the speech problems. It was just me and him all day by ourselves at home. And he would sleep half the day when he was small. I didn't have a TV. I had a radio but never turned it on. So I never talked to anybody. I was just closed in my own home. And I would not go outside. I would not talk all day, and just wait until my husband got home. When he got home, we hardly talked. So my son never learned to talk until real late now. Now he's barely learning. But now, with my daughter I talk too much. She can go a mile a minute and she's the one in the program. You see the big difference between both of them.

Coming from a background where her parents had little time to talk to her, Rafaela behaved in much the same way with her first child until she experienced a significant change through her participation in the program. When she was recruited to the program by the social worker, she was less than enthusiastic, but decided to give the program a try:

> I was sitting there. I didn't know what to do. And I thought, well, I can't lose nothing by going. So I tried it.

She believes she would not have initiated many changes in her childrearing practices in spite of her own history of parental neglect. She was fairly skeptical of the program when she began it.

> I never thought I would learn anything. I thought I knew it all, you know. I said I made it with the first one. I got it made with the second one. But I never realized that they understood so much. That babies understand everything you told them. Well, not everything, but mostly. And I was so surprised. I said how can you talk seriously with a one-year-old or get down face to face and talk with them. Well, it works. I bet nobody else will believe it, because I sure didn't. I didn't believe it for one minute.

Rafaela resisted many parts of the program. As she passed through the ritual stages of the program, she felt that the staff was requiring behaviors that she didn't agree with. She had considerable difficulty with the separation rites:

> I had so much trouble with her. She would only separate from me for a minute. They weren't used to me leaving. I wouldn't leave them anywhere. So when we got to that point and I would leave her, you'd have to start on a real easy one and say, 'We'll be out for coffee for five minutes,' or you go to the bathroom. And they'd stay crying in the room cry until you'd come back. But that was just to make them trust you.... I think it took me three weeks to get separated from her. I never want to go through that again. She just clung to my pants and my legs like I was going to abandon her forever. At the same time, the teacher said that I was too anxious to get rid of her. I felt like I was doing something wrong because most of the mothers had already accomplished that. And I hadn't. I felt awful about it. And I kept on trying to force her to stay there.... I just didn't agree with the separation, how they did it. I said, well, why don't they do it all at once, just leave her there and let her cry until she gets tired. But they wouldn't let me do it that way. And I thought that was wrong, but then when I finally came to realize it, they were right.

Rafaela was confused by a curious contradiction in the program. Whereas she spent three weeks separating from her daughter, each day she had to leave her son in the sibling room. No special procedures were allowed with him, since he "was only a sibling," not the program child.

> I hated it. I felt like crying along with him. I said, 'That's not fair to him. He's in a strange place, too. He's scared, too.' I felt worse about him than I did about her.

After Rafaela survived the separation procedures, she encountered the section on discipline. The overall philosophy of the program clashed somewhat with hers. She holds to a traditional value of "strict discipline" and firmly believes in the value of spanking. As a result her children usually mind her and she does not worry about discipline. Yet here too, she felt compelled to change some of her ways.

> Like I had read some articles on discipline about how to do it, how to ignore when they have a tantrum and I said, that can't be true. You just can't ignore a kid that's kicking and hollering. And when we were talking about it, I said, 'Well, I can't do it.' G. said, 'Just try it.' I started doing it and I could do it. I ignored him completely. So you need to do it, see it to believe it. Because it's not always true what they say in books. But I did see it. Like I said. I wouldn't do everything they say in the books on discipline and potty training and feeding them, but I do it now.

Yet she maintains her criticism of some of the program's advice.

> They put up with so much with the kids. I don't think the kids expect the mother to be that patient. Oh, that kills me. I can't be that way. I mean I am patient with them, but patience has its breaking point, too. I just don't agree with that, I think they should get a little spanking once in a while, because they really act up in there sometimes (the classroom). And they let them get away with murder. But they can't do anything about it, because we're not supposed to touch the kids.

Her criticism also extends to the way staff members treat parents.

> I don't know how to say it, let's see--too nice. It's just that they're getting paid to do that. I wonder about that. I said, 'Gosh, they're nice, they treat you real good.' My husband says, 'Well, I would too if I was getting paid for it.' So you really don't know. Maybe they'll be snobs after you get out of the program or act like they don't even know you, or something.

Rafaela is an example of extensive reorientation to a new set of parenting beliefs and practices. She resisted changing, but the program was such a total experience for her that her resistance was overcome. She most likely would not have initiated such extensive changes in her behavior had she not been recruited to the program. Rites of passage such as separation were powerful experiences which staff members forcefully persuaded her to go through. She was persuaded to discard her own judgment in favor of the experts on a number of issues.

Factors in Rafaela's own life, however, may have predisposed her to receive such a great impact. She was critical of her own parents' child-rearing practices, though she may not have known how to go about changing these practices until she enrolled in the program. When she enrolled in the program, she was isolated and therefore vulnerable to the program's impact. She also agreed with the overall goal of the program of promoting her children's upward mobility through schooling. While she was skeptical of many of the program's procedures and values, she was open to being "proved" wrong, since she held no strong convictions that her ways were the right ways. Finally, she was able to talk about changes in parenting practices with her husband, who was generally supportive of her participation in the program.

Despite her positive assessment of the value of the program for her, Rafaela still feels suspicious. The program reorients people by assuming their deficits, directing and manipulating their behavior while in the program, overlooking their autonomous values and initiative, and ritually redefining their status. Thus, it is not surprising that a subject of reorientation should be suspicious. Rafaela has accepted a wealth of new information and behaviors which conflict with her earlier experience. Her attempt to maintain some personal distance from the program may be seen as a way of taking what she needs and leaving the rest.

b. An Example of Minimum Reorientation

Camelia, mother of three boys, aged nine, five, and two, is thirty-one years old. Her husband currently works in a city some 300 miles away from San Antonio, and therefore spends much of his time away from home. Camelia was born in San Antonio and has lived there all her life. She is still close to her own mother and sisters.

Her concerns as a parent are very similar to those of Rafaela. She too believes in schooling as the only way for her children to escape the difficulties that she and her husband have experienced. She wants her children to choose white-collar or professional careers. Like Rafaela, she is concerned with her children's language development. Her five-year-old, embarking on his school career, has encountered problems.

> I didn't understand what he said to me. And sometimes he got mad because he'd ask me for something, and I wouldn't understand him.... The other day he had a little bit of a cough, and I told him to go get himself a little pill for his cough. And later he said to me, 'Mommy, you forgot to give me that thing.' 'What thing?' And I didn't remember. 'That thing!' 'Which thing,' I said. 'That red thing.' And I didn't know what he was saying. And he got mad and said, 'For the cough.' When he doesn't know something, he just says, 'The thing, that thing.'

Whereas Rafaela connected her son's speech difficulties with her own lack of knowledge, and suggests changes she has made with her daughter based on program advice, Camelia indicates that her son's problems are his own, rather than her inability to understand. The association of anger with lack of articulation is apparently a family problem:

> My husband gets angry and he doesn't want to talk at all. And that's the way the oldest one is too. He gets mad at any little thing. I tell my oldest one, 'Talk to your little brothers.' And I tell my husband that he has to talk to his older son, to hug him sometimes, and not just pay attention to the little ones. And I also explain to my son that being angry is bad. 'You shouldn't do it. You're going to get sick. And you're going to get gray hair because you're so mad.'

Camelia defines her maternal role as holding up the ideals of love and respect. She indicates that she doesn't listen to her children to find out why they are angry. Children should pay attention to their parents, but she never suggests that parents should pay attention to their children, a value advocated by the program. The traditional values she holds are indicated in the following passage:

> My father never hit us. My mother scolded us, but it was so that we would pay attention to her. Children these days are very different. They want to have their own way. The other day, I told M. that when he gets mad, he doesn't look good. He shouldn't put on a bad face. 'When your young brother takes away something, tell me. I'll talk to him. You have to love each other all the time.'

She has trained her five-year-old to avoid bad words.

> My son says, 'I know how to say bad words, but I don't say them because my mother doesn't want me to.' 'I don't want to hear any bad words,' I tell them. And at school that's all you hear, all the children with bad vocabulary.

Her traditional set of values seeks to repress articulations of anger and expressions of independence on the part of her children. She also tries to exclude the children from knowing about her and her husband's marital stress:

> Sometimes, we have fights, my husband and I, but I never discuss them with my children. When they're around, I always tell my husband that. When we were in my mother's house, we never heard shouting or anything like that. And I think I do about the same thing that she did.

The avoidance of confrontation seems a paramount concern of Camelia. Her set of values makes her immune to messages on discipline and teaching advocated by the program. In her interview, she avoided discussing any differences she might have with the program philosophy. There was one aspect of the program, however, that seemed to have some impact on her. When asked what she thought the program was trying to do, she responded, "I think the children go to this little school to learn how to separate. I think that when they go to school, they'll already know something about this."

Camelia also values the separation sequence in the program because it fulfilled some of her own needs.

Her children have always been very "attached" to her and she was never able to leave them with anyone else, not even their grandmother. She enumerated some of the constraints on her life resulting from her children's attachment.

> I just don't have as much time. Even though I try - I like to sew - my youngest son won't let me. He'll ask for something and he'll say, 'Get up, Mother, get up, get up.' So it's better that I just don't plan to do anything.... Sometimes I watch TV or I draw bath water and put bath oil in it, but there's not a whole lot of time for this.... I sleep less. Before I had time to do a lot of things, I could go downtown, and I could get dressed up and fixed up. But now that's more difficult. My children come first. I need to buy them things first.... Now my husband and I never have any time to go out to dances. Now with the boys, I'm alone here without my husband. When we were still going together, we'd go out all the time. Always in the street, we never stayed home. And we'd go visiting, and we'd take other people out.

Separating from her son was the most intense aspect of the program for her.

> I fought for him to stay in the program, and he didn't want to. He cried a lot. He didn't want to stay, so that I was anxious to leave myself.... But they gave me advice. 'You have to make your child adjust. Give him more time,' until finally, thank God, he began to stay playing.

After the separation sequence in the program, she was able to leave her child with a neighbor on the occasion of a wedding that she wanted to attend:

> I told my neighbor, 'If he gets real bad, then just let me know.' And when I came back later, he seemed to have been very content. And I was happy because that was the first time that I had been able to leave him with anybody.

In describing the impact of separation, Camelia still emphasizes the impact it had on the child, rather than on her. For her, the main benefit of the program was the chance to talk with other mothers and overcome her sense of isolation in the home.

As an example of minimum reorientation, Camelia experienced little change in parenting beliefs and practices. She continued to express traditional values she had acquired from her own parents, and ignored conflicting advice offered by the program. For her, separation was not a ritual leading to a new kind of parenting. On the other hand, she was willing to go through separation, and resisted it less than Rafaela, because it fulfilled her need to alter her own role of total motherhood. In a sense, this impact contradicts the intended reorientation goal of the program because Camelia felt no need to assume a new role of questioning her own interactions with her children and self-consciously teaching them behaviors for school. When asked if she thought she had changed the way in which she handled her children, she responded, "No, I think I treat them the same."

Unlike Rafaela, she felt no resistance to the program, for she did not let it challenge her basic beliefs. She did not feel manipulated or coerced by staff, and so she harbored no suspicion about them. Rather, she appreciates the social contact in the program. "It's sort of like a home for us here. We come every morning. We chat and we drink coffee. I talk about my problems and then talk about theirs." Rafaela found this closeness threatening, but Camelia feels as if the staff and other mothers are like a family.

Given that both Camelia and Rafaela espoused agreement with program goals on improving their children's chances in school, and they both expressed concern about their children's language development, why the contrasting impact? Two significant differences in personal history may account for the differential impact. Rafaela had rejected many of the practices with which her parents raised her. She also had moved to San Antonio away from their continuing influence. Camelia, on the other hand, frequently relied on her mother's advice and consciously transmitted to her children the values she had learned from her parents. Secondly, Rafaela had little difficulty negotiating differences with her husband and he generally supported her changes. Camelia's husband was frequently absent and often disagreed with her when he was home. These different personal factors suggest that reorientation is more likely to happen to women who reject their parental influence and are supported by their husbands in their program participation.

c. An Example of Partial Reorientation

Margarita, thirty-one years old, is the mother of two sons, ages four and two. She and her husband moved to San Antonio from a town in Northern Mexico some seven years ago. Subsequently they returned to their town of birth to work for a year, before moving back to San Antonio permanently. Margarita speaks very little English, but her husband learned English before they were married when he worked for some time in Chicago.

Margarita explained how her and her husband's background has influenced the way they are trying to raise their own children:

> ...My husband came from a larger family, nine or ten. In many things he felt like they didn't pay attention to him --that his mother had a preference for another, or his father would punish them when they didn't want to do something, or they had to do things at any time and he would be sent where he didn't want to go and nobody asked him why he didn't want to go. They just had to go. And so because of many things like that, he wants to be different now. So now when they get their clothes dirty, or something like that, he says, 'Don't punish them,' or when they tear their clothes. And I also think in my family sometimes it happened that you didn't want to go to a given place or go on an errand, and they would never ask you. They always said, 'You have to go because I am your mother and I'm telling you to.' Or they somehow felt superior and gave authority to the older ones. My husband doesn't like that, that one should be more. We are trying to teach them that they are brothers, they are the same. And we always ask them, 'Why don't you want to do that or why don't you want to drink that.' Or also, sometimes when you give them medicine they don't like it, and we don't try to give it

> to them by force. We explain to them and we try to do it the best way we can. But they have to drink it....

Margarita's account of her and her husband's background indicates that both of them were raised in a traditional family structure with its hierarchical ranking of siblings crowned by unquestioned parental authority. Her tendency away from the disciplinary style under which they were raised appears deep-seated. As in the passage above, Margarita volunteered throughout the interview instances of specific behavior (getting clothes dirty, taking medicine) and her ways of dealing with them. In this sense she represents the type of mother who does not simply react to incidents but rather has considered options for disciplining her children.

Important in her approach to discipline is her relationship with her husband, with whom she discussed childrearing, negotiates differences, and comes to a common agreement.

> When they are with me, sometimes they behave better. But when they are with their father, they take some advantage because he just got there, and he just gives them more leeway.... But since I'm the one in the house more time with them, I try to have certain rules...on certain things my husband and I do not agree. And in some others, we just talk about it longer, and I explain to him this and that and the why, and then we reach an agreement. We always think of the children because he say the children will be educated according to what we decide, not according to other people, what other people say....

Given Margarita's reaction to her own upbringing and the influence of her husband, she tends towards a non-authoritarian discipline style. This tendency found confirmation in the classes on discipline which she attended in the Mother-Child Development Program. Moreover, Margarita indicates that the program brought about many of the concrete changes in her behavior that support a belief in a non-authoritarian approach to discipline.

> ...We have discussed things where I was wrong here in the program, and it has helped me very much. There were things that I was just wrong with the children...sometimes, I didn't find the way to explain things, and I would tell them no, or I don't know, and I wouldn't give them an explanation. And they got mad. And I didn't explore what was the reason or I didn't pay attention to them or I would just spank them or punish them, sending to their room. But now I've been trying to work with them more.

In this case, it appears that the program's message on ways to discipline your children catalyzed changes in Margarita's behavior that corresponded to convictions that she had brought to the program.

Margarita made no mention of other aspects of the child development curriculum. She expressed complete satisfaction with being a full-time mother:

> Many times we talked with them and I talked with my husband. What would have happened if we didn't have children? Do you remember when we were alone that we were so bored. They feel very important in our lives.... Now for other mothers, what I do might be considered a hardship or a struggle, but I wanted children. I look at them sometimes. And I feel, how can it be true that they have grown so fast and developed like this. And I think that now I feel happier than before.

With these feelings, separation could not have made too much sense to her, but apparently it did not threaten her either.

While wanting her child to have a good education, she did not express a sense of the primacy of schooling as a means for upward mobility. Her failure to mention any impact of the Teaching sections of the curriculum is consistent with her lack of emphasis on schooling.

As a case of partial reorientation, Margarita confirms certain findings from the first case example. She rejected aspects of the way she was raised. She moved to San Antonio and her parents no longer influence her to any great degree. Her husband also supports changes that she is undertaking. On the other hand, given her Mexican background, schooling is not seen as quite so important, while the traditional role of mother is immune to program change.

Of all three cases, Margarita was the most critical of the administration of the program. She felt that the funding crisis in the program was mishandled, since she had been counting on both learning English and receiving stipends for her participation. She suggested that other aspects of the program could have been cut instead and that mothers should have been included in the decision-making. She also fought with staff members over signing application forms for free lunch program, since she felt receiving government funds directly would jeopardize her status as an immigrant. Staff members could not accept her refusal and she resented their insensitive probe into her reasons for refusing. The clear criticisms that she offered in her interview contrast with both Camelia and Rafaela. Camelia accepted the program without criticism, while Rafaela was suspicious and confused about certain aspects, but could not clearly identify what she wanted. Margarita's understanding of what she needed and what the program gave her underlies the partial reorientation that she experienced, a reorientation that she wanted to direct and control herself.

d. An Example of Needs not Addressed

Sandy is an eighteen-year-old mother of two boys, two years old and three months old. She is separated from her husband and lives with her mother and four brothers. She was born in San Antonio and still depends on her extended family for various kinds of help. In addition to attending the MCDP in the mornings, she works a night shift cleaning offices and stores.

Sandy's life is troubled by a number of concerns that the program does not begin to address. Her greatest difficulty is meeting her financial responsibilities:

> The most difficult thing about being a parent is money, see, because you don't have anything they need. Sometimes you don't have clothes, sometimes you don't have food, that's the most difficult. Money. See, if you have a good job or a good husband who could be with you every day, so that we could raise more family and you could make it with more kids. And they could have everything they want to.... I feel different now that I have kids, because sometimes I used to work when I was by myself. And I knew that money, if I didn't have any money, my parents would give me some money, so I didn't really have to worry for this and that. So now I do, because my parents don't help me anymore. I have to do it myself with my kids and I have to be calling the baby's father at least to bring me some money during the weekend, so for him to remember that he has kids.

Sandy is not able to get as much help from her extended family, since they feel that her husband is responsible. Her mother does help out with child care, but Sandy and her mother disagree on how much supervision children need. Sandy thinks her mother left her and her brothers alone too much, and did not properly care that they were clean and well-dressed.

Sandy's first husband has been trying to gain custody of the two-year-old because he thinks he can assume more of the financial responsibilities than she can. Sandy is determined to resist these attempts, because she thinks that she cares about the child more than his father does. She does not want him to live with his father, for fear that he will get used to being away from her. One of the reasons that she started working was to be able to afford a lawyer to fight for custody of the child. But since she has been working, she has left the children with her mother and admits that she has had difficulty getting along with the older boy. The relationship with her older boy has further deteriorated due to his jealousy of the new baby.

This web of difficulties in Sandy's life is simply left outside of the program's parameters. Sandy has been counseled by the social worker at the center and appreciates the help she has received. The program as a whole avoids dealing with issues affecting many single parents such as negotiation with families and with estranged husbands over child care responsibilities. Given this mismatch of Sandy's needs and the program's services, it is not surprising that she has little to say about the impact of the program on her childrearing behaviors. She believes that the center primarily benefits her son. She reports that he has learned names of things at the center. She expected that the teachers would read more to the children, and was disappointed that they didn't. Reading to her children is one of the experiences that Sandy most enjoys.

As for herself, she says that the child development classes have taught her to be more "patient" with her children. Since she believes that she will now have to raise her children by herself, she has been interested in information about child development, but she was able to recall few behaviors or strategies that she has learned from the center. The only specific change that she mentioned was to allow her children to play barefooted and get dirty if they wanted to.

Sandy is a very young mother with a plethora of difficulties. These surely prevent her from meaningfully applying program advice in her life. She nevertheless valued participation in the program for the simple reason that it provided one alternative place and set of people with which to share some of her problems.

Sandy is not an anomalous case. Other young single mothers came to the center with serious problems, unable to get enough support from either parents and family or from estranged husbands. In these cases, the impact of the reorientation curriculum is slight. By providing some counseling services, the program supports these mothers in a limited way.

D. Impact

The Mother Child Development Program is designed to introduce minority, low income mothers to new roles and behaviors which child development experts who have designed the program believe lead to improved academic performance for the participants' children. In order to accomplish this overall goal, the program 1) hires and trains both professional and paraprofessional minority staff, 2) creates a bilingual environment in a familiar community setting, 3) institutes classes and activities that continually direct participants towards the intended objectives of the program, which 4) constitute a prolonged and intensive intervention in participants' daily evolving relationship with their young child, and which 5) utilize powerful mechanisms to ritually intensify program experience and resocialize mothers to a new status (the teacher role).

There is no question that a program such as the Mother Child Development Program has great and long-lasting impact on the lives of both the participating mothers and children, compared to other programs documented in this report. Any program which occupies so much of participants' daily lives must have some kind of substantial impact. Published evaluations by the program's research staff confirm claims of general effectiveness in accomplishing attitudinal and behavioral changes in participating mothers and children compared to the control sample.

Through interviews with participants, this research team gathered information on participants' own assessments of the program. We found that: 1) while all participants reported some program effects, only some indicated that the program made a significant difference in their lives as mothers, 2) some mothers expressed satisfaction with the program for completely different reasons than the outcomes intended by the program, 3) individuals absorbed different aspects of the program curriculum, 4) some of the central messages of the program supported the mothers' own values while other messages conflicted with their values, 5) the program did not meet certain needs expressed by the participants, and finally that 6) the degree of impact on participants depended on two principal factors in participants' background and current family circumstances. These conclusions concerning program impact are based on the self-report of participants.

Many of the mothers reported changes in their behavior with their children. A particularly strong area of impact was on mothers' verbal behaviors, in line with the program's emphasis on verbal skills. Participants attended more to teaching their children words through daily activities and conversing with their children more about the world of the home, the world conveyed through television, and children's own play. Some mothers held a "language deficit" theory of their child's verbal development as well as a deficit model of their own verbal abilities. These assumptions of deficit were confirmed by their program participation and they learned to "compensate" by acquiring the new techniques of verbal interaction. In addition, participants indicated they adopted more verbal methods of disciplining their children. Finally, some mothers acquired the language of the program, learning labels for techniques of interaction which they had previously practiced, but had not been able to articulate in the language of child development.

All mothers reported that they "paid attention" more to their children. This included listening more to their children's point of view. Some mothers adopted less authoritarian methods of discipline. While many believed in spanking, they also thought that they themselves as parents should recognize children's needs more than they were accustomed to before they started in the program. In regard to this change, some of these women were reevaluating the traditional family dynamics encoded in the cultural value of "respect."

Finally, many women found that their role of mother expanded as they became conscious of teaching and disciplinarian roles, in addition to nurturing roles. Being a mother became something more complicated as well. Whereas most participants continued to hold a traditional value that only kinspeople should be allowed to care for children in a mother's absence, many were not sure any longer if their kinspeople's childrearing values and practices were adequate compared to the advice of the program. While some mothers began to doubt the childrearing traditions of their mothers and mothers-in-law, they also began to trust more in professional strangers such as the staff of the program. They began to reevaluate the role of exclusive motherhood. As they became more aware of an expanded mother role, they found that not only did they need to be aware of discipline and teaching techniques, but they also needed to be cognizant of "managing" their children's comings and goings between impersonal institutional arenas and highly personal kinship systems.

While many mothers reported these effects, some of the women indicated that these effects were incidental changes in their family lives. They denied dramatic changes in their childrearing practices. These women were more closely tied to their own parents and their community of birth, San

Antonio. Some of the problems of family conflict with spouses or with their extended family were not addressed in the program. They did, however, affirm a more diffuse impact of the program in providing them with generalized support. They found that the center provided a warm, family-like environment which they usually enjoyed.

As illustrated in the individual case examples in an earlier section, the participants absorbed different parts of the curriculum in accordance with their different concerns. If the curriculum had been presented in such a way that participants could have chosen their areas of interest, some of the negative assessments of the program might have been avoided. Since the messages presented were interlinked, and the totality of the curriculum was persuasively communicated to participants without encouraging dissent or alternative points of view, participants seemed to respond in one of two ways. Either they found themselves absorbing those ideas they found useful and acquiescing to the rest of the curriculum, experiencing some cognitive dissonance with previous beliefs and practices; or they ignored much of the curriculum, attaching their own meanings to selected aspects. The rites of separation are a good example of these alternative outcomes. They caused a good amount of dissonance for some mothers who did not see good reasons for the prolonged anxiety experienced by themselves and their children. Other women, however, reinterpreted separation, ignoring whether it was "good" for the child, while seeing it as a useful way to relieve themselves of some of the burden of full-time motherhood.

While some of the mothers experienced dissonance with the curriculum's messages on separation and discipline and others ignored messages which did not seem relevant to them, the program's emphasis on education as a value and goal of rearing young children matched all of the participants' high regard for education. This commonly held value may explain how less salient aspects of the curriculum were tolerated by some and accepted by others, even when they might have conflicted with other cultural values such as "respect" and exclusive motherhood.

Two principal factors accounted for these different degrees of impact among the various participants. First, those who felt the greatest impact, with one exception, were women who had moved to San Antonio, either from Mexico or from a more rural setting in Texas. This group included monolingual Spanish-speakers and monolingual English-speakers. Only with their arrival in San Antonio did both groups begin to seek the skills necessary to become fluent in both languages. Each group represented differing orientations to childrearing advice of the program: the English speaking Mexican-American women from rural Texas were more interested in teaching skills offered by the program while the Mexican women were more interested in discipline skills. Yet both of these groups had in common a desire to change their childrearing practices from the ones with which they had been raised, and both groups had put distance between themselves and their families of origin through the move to San Antonio. They also tended to come from larger families, which may account for the negative assessments of their childhoods.

The converse of this analysis generally held true as well; those women who had not moved to San Antonio, but had grown up in the city, usually in the same neighborhood in which they now raise their children, tended to report a smaller degree of impact. They indicated that their childrearing values were similar to their own parents. Many continued to live with or close to their parents. Some reported conflict with their parents, but did not articulate values and practices significantly different from those with which they were raised. As a result, the program's advice had a less profound effect on them. These San Antonio natives continued to hold conservative views of discipline, at odds with the more liberal advice of the program. Only one exception to this generalization was found, a woman whose remarkable self-confidence seemed to encourage her to experiment with a new mother role. All the San Antonio natives were completely bilingual, neither seeking English classes nor trying to rediscover a lost Spanish tongue. Their problems had less to do with childrearing and more to do with lack of financial and emotional support in the difficult environment of the inner-city.

This leads to the second principal factor accounting for differential impact. Current family support was crucial for high degrees of impact. As mentioned above, single mothers in conflict with others in an extended household experienced less impact. For married women, husband support for their participation made the crucial difference. The women who could discuss child development lessons and strategies with their husbands and secure their agreement absorbed much more of the program. Conversely, those women whose husbands were either frequently absent from the home or whose husbands refused to talk with them about their program experience were less inclined to report significant changes in their behavior.

In summary, the impact of the program on participants' childrearing practices confirms some of the intended outcomes expected by the program. These outcomes, however, are both more and less than what many of the participants wanted. The impact on some mothers' childrearing practices was great enough to cause dissonance; yet the program neglected teaching skills and supporting ambitions that many mothers had to enhance their competence in dealing with the Anglo world around them. The cutbacks in classes teaching English and driving, as well as the overall neglect of job-related training left some of the women frustrated. In addition, the general inability of the program to address how mothers could deal with their husbands' and other caretakers' family roles diminished the significance of what the mothers themselves learned in childrearing techniques.

This last remark suggests not necessarily a fault in the design or implementation of the program as much as a limit to the effectiveness of the program as long as it concentrates on mother education. The program does encourage father participation in some of the evening meetings and weekend workshops and has changed some fathers' attitudes, according to staff accounts. The program's concentration on mother education can be seen as a pragmatic strategy that accepts a traditional sexist division of responsibility for childrearing, rather than challenging a deeply embedded cultural system. Nevertheless, by attempting to change the mother's role while neglecting the father's role, the program runs the danger of overburdening the mother and attenuating the traditional role of the Mexican-American father without providing a new father's role. While we found no evidence to support this speculation (we conducted no interviews with fathers), interviews with mothers indicated that as long as fathers are considered secondary participants in childrearing, the impact of mother education on family life will be limited.

In conclusion, the program most definitely heightens the competence of participants as mothers, but it neglects other of their needs as low-income married women. This unintended impact of the program is compounded by the model of cultural deficit encoded in the curriculum by its designers, held by most of the staff, and operationalized through the hierarchical structuring of educational encounters and organizational roles. Together, these attitudes, ideological messages, and structures defined the women participating as the least competent, least powerful people in the situation.

E. The MCDP as a Case Study of Cultural Reorientation

Having described the organization and formal properties, the participant characteristics, and the parental concerns and impacts of the Mother Child Development Program, this conclusion attempts to draw out the fundamental features which can serve to classify this program as a case of the general model of cultural reorientation. Central to this model of parent education and cultural change is the relationship set up between a dominant culture which designs and implements the program and a minority culture which experiences the impact.

In the first place, the funds, supervision, organization, and curriculum are all determined from outside the community of parents which the program serves. Just as the Anglo school system and most places of work controlled by Anglos impose their values on the people of a minority culture, so do parent education programs impose certain values associated with the family structures and values of the dominant culture. While parent education intends to mediate the relationship of minority families to school and work, it in reality ends up replicating the relationship. Thus, in the Mother Child Development Program, certain behaviors thought to be important for school performance are selectively emphasized as the skills that mothers should teach their children. The possibility that more traditional behaviors of ethnic groups may be equally effective is rarely considered. Thus, the traditional value of respect is further undermined for mothers participating in the program. The emphasis on verbal behavior ignores the possibility of equally effective non-verbal means of communicating with and controlling children. These values emerge in the parent education program despite the fact that all staff are bilingual, many of the classes are held bilingually, and there is a conscious but superficial affirmation of Mexican-American culture in the program.

The hierarchical organization and the consistent reinforcement of asymmetrical status relationships are an important feature in a cultural reorientation model. That the ideology and practice of the organization advocate more egalitarian parent-child relationships while at the same time undermining mothers' adult status in the program is an especially ironic twist in this kind of model. These ideological and organizational features derive from an underlying assumption of the reorientation model of the program. By virtue of their being low-income, minority women with young children, all participants are assumed to be deficient in childrearing beliefs, behaviors, and knowledge. This assumption is most evident in the recruitment strategy of the program: all mothers with young children who meet the income guidelines and live in the area are assumed to need the training provided by the program; selection of participants from this supposedly homogeneous pool of needy mothers is not based on participants' own incentive or definition of need; instead, selection is based on the research agenda of the program, a criteria wholly extraneous to the services offered by the program and used by the parents. Neither participants' own expressed needs nor an assessment of need by the program have anything to do with participants' selection into the program. Whoever is selected is assumed to be just as needy as participants who are not selected, simply because all potential recruits have in common low-income and minority status.

Since all participants are assumed to have the same problem, the program's solution is a highly structured, uniform, and intensive attempt to compensate for the assumed deficit in parental abilities of the participants. Parents are reoriented to childrearing values and behaviors established by experts of the dominant culture. Other possible definitions of the problems of low-income, minority mothers are neglected.

Our interviews with participants contradicted the underlying assumption of the program. In the first place, participants did not constitute a homogeneous group of women. They differed in terms of their family structures, in terms of the degree of their prior assimilation to Anglo culture, and in terms of their childrearing values. Moreover, they differed in the kind of motivation they brought to the program, the concerns and problems of family life which preoccupied them, and the kinds of classes (and issues) which they would benefit from. Since parents do not have a say over the program and the program assumes the problem of childrearing is the same for all participants, the program overlooks the varying needs and motivations of the parents who attend the program.

If the program were to select participants on the basis of their need, either self-expressed or otherwise determined, for the program's classes, then the outcomes of the program may more closely match the program's reorientation goals. Alternatively, if the program adapted to the variety of needs and expectations of low-income, minority women, then the program itself would look very different. It might include more classes on skills needed by women to enhance their own livelihood and well-being. It might include job-training for some mothers, more intensive English classes for other mothers, Spanish classes for English-speaking mothers, strategies for dealing with agencies, schools, and institutions of the dominant society for others, in addition to child development and home management classes for those mothers who felt the need to change their parental and homemaking roles. Other issues might evolve as participants felt they could express their own problems and organize their own solutions. If the program evolved in this manner, the central assumption that all participants shared the same deficit would change. The model assumed by the program would resemble less the cultural reorientation currently espoused by the program. The program might well adopt an elaboration model or even a reinforcement model. This evolution, however, is unlikely as long as the design, management, and funding of the program is organized far from the locus of impact.

CHAPTER V: THE ASSOCIATION OF MOTHERS: A CASE STUDY OF CULTURAL REINFORCEMENT

by Andrea Meditch

Outline

A. The Organization
  1. History
  2. The Setting
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  4. Stated Goals of the Association
  5. Components of the Organization
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  6. Recruiting New Members
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D. Program Impact

E. The Association of Mothers as Cultural Reinforcement

A. The Organization

The Association of Mothers is an organization of approximately 200 mothers of primarily preschool or young school-age children. The organization was started in 1976 by one woman and was designed to meet the needs of middle-class Anglo mothers. It is financially supported through three types of membership dues which may be paid yearly (Annual Members), by meeting (Associates), or only for the newsletter (Subscribers). There is no paid staff; the leadership consists of a board of directors elected each year. The organization sponsors monthly meetings open to the general public, with invited speakers who talk on a variety of topics concerning mothers and children. The board meets once a month to plan these meetings and to discuss other periodic activities such as garage sales and conferences. In addition, three smaller neighborhood groups open only to members meet once a month in members' homes in north, northwest, and south River City. Finally, all Members and Subscribers receive a monthly newsletter.

1. History

The Association of Mothers was begun in 1976 by Alice, a thirty year-old Anglo woman who had recently immigrated to the U.S. from a country in Southern Africa. When it first started, the organization was a small group of five or six women living in Alice's apartment building who met regularly to discuss shared problems and feelings. As Alice reports, more and more mothers began coming to the meetings and after about six months it became evident to her that many mothers shared feelings of frustration and isolation. Consequently, she decided to expand the organization. Using a list of names from the local university's faculty wives babysitting cooperative, she announced a meeting at her home to discuss problems of motherhood. Instead of the expected fifteen people, some forty women attended. On the basis of this apparent interest, the original group of people formed what they called an "ad hoc planning group" to determine the future of the organization. The planning group, led by Alice, decided to establish the group as a non-profit organization, requiring a board structure, and to move the meetings to a public building which could accommodate the growing number of women attending the meetings. The ad hoc group was responsible for selecting the members of the first Board of Directors. People on the planning group informally contacted women they felt might be interested. The first Board was voted into place in March of 1977, with Alice as president.

During the first year of the new Board, the organization held monthly meetings in a local branch library auditorium. Members also received monthly newsletters announcing upcoming meetings and reporting on previous ones. Near the end of that year, it was decided that the ever larger monthly meetings should be augmented by smaller neighborhood meetings which would be for members only. These neighborhood meetings were started late in 1977.

A second Board was nominated and elected in March of 1978. It consisted primarily of the same people who had served on the first board, with one main exception--the vice-president quit in a dispute with the president and a new vice-president was elected. During the course of this study, from October 1978 to March 1979, the leadership consisted of this second Board. A third Board was elected at the end of the study period. Alice, founder and Board president for the first two years, left that post to begin a nationally-based organization of mothers and the vice-president was elected president of the local Association.

2. The Setting

Over the course of the development of the Association of Mothers, the location of general meetings changed several times. The reasons for changing the locations reveals something of the nature of the organization and their values. The first public meeting was held in a local women's center affiliated with a national women's rights group. It was the only meeting held there because the leaders felt that the center represented a feminist orientation which might discourage some of the women they wished to attract. In addition, several people pointed out that it was "downtown," which was described as being dangerous. These women said their husbands would not permit them to go "downtown" after dark.

The search for a new location after the women's center proved una[illegible]tive was limited primarily if not exclusively to "northwest" River City. The new location in a branch library in this area was in part dictated by practical considerations. Approximately 50% of the membership lived in the north part of the city. Of these, some 29% live "northwest." The selection of a meeting place in the northwest section made it convenient for half of the membership. However, given the road system in the city, locating the meetings in this area made it extremely inconvenient for the remaining half of the membership. The reasons for the selection of this location went beyond practical considerations, and suggest that the reputation of the area was also very influential. Northwest is considered to be one of the most prestigious areas in River City in which to live. It is predominantly middle- to upper-middle class, suburban, and almost exclusively Anglo.

The recently built library stood at the end of a new shopping center. The meetings were held in the library auditorium, a large room, about forty by twenty feet, carpeted, with an acoustic ceiling, and hidden, soft overhead lighting. The room was not square (one wall was curved) and the colors in the room were warm--mustards, oranges, reds. These factors contributed to a sense of warmth and intimacy and reduced the feeling that one was in an auditorium or lecture hall.

For the general meetings, two tables were set up near the back of the room where those arriving registered. One table was for non-members, those people coming for the first time or those who paid for just that one meeting. The money was collected by a Board member in charge of membership, and the newcomer was given a yellow name tag. The other table was for members who signed in and put on white name tags. The difference in name tags points out two important facets of the organization. First, the group is sufficiently large that name tags are necessary; second, a difference is maintained between members and non-members. The name tags were used as part of the definition of the group, a way to identify "us" from "them."

Depending on the topic, the lecturer for the evening sometimes used a lectern, but most often stood and spoke informally to the group. People sat on the floor for the lecture; chairs were never used at the library, a feature which annoyed several of the mothers who were pregnant. Clustered according to friendship groups and seated on the carpet, the audience seemed informal and intimate, overcoming the more formal elements of a lecture format.

Midway through the study, the meeting place for general meetings was moved once again. The library began to close earlier, truncating discussion among members after the speaker's presentation. A new location was chosen in the basement of a Protestant church. The church was east of the library and consequently closer to the main north/south throughway of the city; this made the church more accessible to the members who lived on the south side of town, or "live south," as it was called. However, the location was still in the north of town.

The church basement was white painted cinder-block construction, with a linoleum floor, a piano along one wall and a lecture podium. Chairs arranged in rows facing the podium were used for the speaker presentations. The immediate effect of the more formal, lecture format was that the discussion groups which usually followed a speaker stopped. This may not have been solely due to the change in physical space, but it was a contributing factor.

The distinctions between "downtown," "northwest," "south," and "north" River City are important ones which have ramifications for the demographic characteristics of the membership. The essential criteria for selection of a location in the moves described above were (1) that it not be downtown, (2) that it not be in east River City, (3) that south was undesirable because it was "too far away," (4) that it be available free of charge, and (5) that the structure accommodate breaking up into small discussion groups after the speaker presentation. These explicit criteria provide a particular view of the city which lends insight into the group. East is black, brown and poor and therefore out of the question; downtown was described in similar terms. South was "too far away" from the people who lived in the northwest, suggesting that those members asserted their power to locate the group.

The setting was selected as a place where middle class or upper-middle class Anglo women would feel comfortable, a place which is consistent with their values and lifestyle. Both places used for general meetings reflected those values.

3. Community Context

The Association of Mothers has a particular relationship to the surrounding community which reflects both the organizational features of the group as well as the characteristics of the membership. The financial base of the Association is almost wholly based on dues: Annual members ($12.00/year), Associate members ($1.50/meeting), Subscribers ($5.00/year for monthly newsletter). According to the treasurer, this is barely enough to cover the cost of the newsletter and postage, the largest regular expenditure of the group. There have been occasional fund raising activities. In 1978, they had a successful garage sale.

The financial base, then, is completely generated by the group; it is not directly supported financially by any organization, group, or institution outside itself. This financial autonomy has several implications. First, policy, philosophy, or group direction cannot be dictated from outside the organization contingent on continued financial support. Second, no external organizational linkages could cause the group to disband; it can only be disbanded internally. Third, links established with organizations outside the Association originate from and can be terminated by the Association at will. The Association is self-maintained, self-directed, and self-defined.

The types of links established by the Association form a loose middle class network (Bott, 1957). The members and leaders use themselves and each other as resources to suggest speakers and locations for the meetings; these contacts then suggest others. The leaders have been successful in getting a wide array of professionals, including educators, psychologists, doctors, nutritionists, local talk show personalities, and politicians to make presentations at Association of Mothers meetings free of charge.

The Program Chair and President interview the prospective speaker, and, to paraphrase one informant, offer them an exchange. The speaker is asked to speak for free and in return the speaker can expect to "learn something from us as well" since the group is highly educated and "sharp." One of the qualifications of the Program Chair, which was mentioned by several people, was that she have good "contacts" with local professionals. The use of local professionals as a resource pool would only be possible for a middle class group who had the knowledge to activate such a network. The use of such a pool also insures that the leaders who select and "brief" the speakers, maintain a considerable amount of control over who speaks and what information is presented to the group, determining which values are reinforced.

In summary, organizational links originate and are maintained by the Association. This permits the Association to control what kinds of speakers and the types of information they will be exposed to. The organization keeps its freedom to select speakers who will reinforce the philosophy of the group as articulated by those leaders in a position to select the speakers.

4. Stated Goals of the Association

The organization goals are most clearly and frequently expressed by Alice, the founder of the group. She took responsibility for writing the brochures which described the group's goals and philosophy, for the newsletters each month which contained a reference to the shared experience of motherhood, and for what one informant described as "inspirational" talks at the start of each general meeting which tied the topic for the night into the general goals of the organization.

The philosophy as represented in the brochures has changed somewhat since the inception of the group to include a greater awareness of women working outside the home. This awareness was not part of the original design which was exclusively for mothers who stay at home. The original brochure stated that the objectives of the group were to:

> "provide a forum for discussion of common concerns related to the psychological and creative growth of women with children.
>
> "provide a support group for all mothers and particularly for women who have made a conscious decision to be at home and who have definite goals towards achieving success as a mother-person.
>
> "places a high priority on home life and is dedicated to raising the status of motherhood in a realistic way, by challenging the myths of that institution.
>
> "believes in maintaining contact with current issues. This will be reflected in the variety of topics and invited speakers.
>
> "as a group with special interests and special representation, will monitor and react to public affairs..."

Several important features of these objectives are immediately obvious. First, the Association speaks to the mother who is at home. Stay-at-home mothers presuppose the financial ability of the family to support an unpaid woman; in short, the objectives speak to the middle income family with husband as breadwinner and with the wife at home with the children. Second, it focuses on women, not on the children. It is concerned with the "mother-person," with the development of the woman's psychological and creative potential, rather than her children's cognitive and social growth. Third, the institution of stay-at-home mothering and the value of the home is explicitly supported. In general, the objectives focus on two different aspects: the reinforcement of traditional mothering and exposing women to current issues and a variety of topics.

The brochure also is personal in its approach. The implicit message related is that 'we know what you, the mother, are going through.' This personal appeal based on shared experience and the message that 'there are others like you, you are not alone,' comes through in a paragraph on the back of the brochure:

> What's happening to motherhood? Traditionally mothers have chosen to stay home, not wanting to miss a day of children growing up, and wanting to enjoy those intense feelings of love, closeness and gratification. Like a "job," mothering is critically important, but there is no training for it. It can be very isolating, and the responsibility sometimes is overwhelming, especially in relation to the limited recognition and support received from our culture. Feeling trapped in their homes and losing confidence in themselves, many mothers are deciding that only women who work outside the home can achieve self-worth.

This paragraph captures several of the tenets of the Association's philosophy. First, mothering is considered full-time work which most mothers expect to be fulfilling and satisfying. Second, the implicit message is that if the mother does not feel fulfilled, it is not her fault; the fault lies with the culture at large, and with lack of training for parenthood. This explanation essentially reinterprets isolation and lack of confidence that mothers may be feeling by implying that it is shared, not private or personal. This explanation relieves the individual from feeling totally responsible for their negative feelings. The Association of Mothers proposes to remedy this problematic situation by supporting the mother and trying to gain more recognition for the work that she is doing. The comparison of motherhood to doing a "job" implies a larger theme of the Association: that one way to raise the status of motherhood is to recognize it as a profession. It should be noted that the emphasis is on supporting or reinforcing the mother in what she is already doing and in changing the social context, rather than changing her role. Nothing in the organization urges her to get a paid job outside the home or to change her childrearing practices.

The second brochure includes the following list of "purposes:"

> "to provide a support group for women with children
>
> "to evaluate and better understand the role of the mother in society and encouraging dialogue between parents and professionals on a multi-disciplinary level
>
> "to promote the role of the family in society."

The brochures provide an indication of the overall philosophy of the Association of Mothers which is reflected in the newsletters and in the talks given by the president before each meeting. The Association gives mothers support by providing a forum for personal exchange between women where the value of full-time mothering and the role of the family are reinforced. This reinforcement will take at least two different forms: first, putting a woman in contact with other mothers like her recasts the mother's lack of confidence, isolation, and frustration into a social (shared, not individual) issue; second, while recognizing her primary role as a mother, the organization provides time away from her "job" and exposes her to a "professional" perspective.

5. Components of the Organization

An explicit goal of the Association is to provide the participants with "personal support" for themselves as mothers. In most societies in the world, the domestic or private sphere is considered to be the province of women, including childrearing and homemaking, while the political or public sphere is considered to be the province of men (Lamphere, 1974). Our contemporary American society is no exception to this generalization.

In order to impact this essentially domestic, private aspect of women's lives, the Association has marshalled organizational forms that are commonly associated with the higher status public business world. The Association has tried to combine the two spheres by choosing a corporate mode of organization and ideology borrowed from the male world, to build an organization devoted to raising the status of a domestic role. Throughout this discussion, it is important to maintain the distinctions between leaders and members, because their differential experiences set them apart.

a. The Board

The Association of Mothers incorporated in the summer of 1977, assuming non-profit status as an organization with a limited board. This represented an increase in complexity from a more informal "ad hoc planning group" responsible for planning monthly meetings to a more complex structure which, according to the bylaws of incorporation, allocated tasks according to prescribed positions on the Board.

At the time of this study, the Board consisted of fifteen women filling thirteen positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Membership, Program, Phone and Communication, Liaison, Mailing List, Special Projects, Southside Coordinators (2), Northwest Coordinators (2), Publicity, and Secretary. The Association organizes its Board with considerable informality. The bylaws are only partially complete and the responsibilities of each board position are not clearly described. Positions have changed from one board to the next and positions are created for interested individuals. At times conflict arises between certain positions because of overlap in responsibilities.

Although different board members were responsible for different tasks, the president retained considerable, and by some reports excessive, control over most aspects of the organization.

The organizational philosophy of the president was to

> ...see [the Association] as a business. You can run an enormous business with two people. ...We like to run [the Association] with as few people as possible simply because we feel it's more efficient since we can...we have three or four people who have the same aims. The agenda is clear.

This approach resulted in the president's assuming control of almost every aspect of the organization except the planning of the neighborhood meetings. Because she controlled, for example, the selection of speakers, the articulation of the Association philosophy in the newsletters and in talks before the group, she had great influence over the flow of information, the definition of the group's philosophy, and the expansion or limitation of new or proposed activities for the group.

The original design of the Association was in part based on the president's organizational philosophy. According to Alice, as well as to other Board members, the Association was deliberately designed to differ from volunteer organizations in that the general membership would not be required or requested to participate in activities or committees. A small group of board members would be responsible for planning and carrying out the general meetings, the newsletter, and the neighborhood meetings, and an individual member could come to the activities of her choosing without doing any work for the organization. As expressed by the president:

> What we've said is that this group is just for you...I try to tell myself that most volunteer organizations see their volunteers as sort of a liquid thing that they can use as manpower.... Our membership is there simply to enjoy themselves. Should some of them hear about our projects which we would make obviously available, they are then free to come forth....

This statement captures the tension between control and flexibility which is present in the Association. The board, largely controlled by a single person, constructs and carries out the activities; these are made available to the wider membership who may participate as they wish. While this provides the members with the freedom to participate without returning a service, it also means that the board (again primarily the president) and not the membership controls the content and direction of the group.

During the course of this study, an increasing number of board members publicly and privately expressed concern over the president's control of the organization. A significant minority of the board felt that the "agenda" of the president, which included the establishment of a nationally based organization, a statewide conference, and action groups, no longer adequately reflected the needs of the membership. Further, concern was expressed that this mode of operation had closed the board and its planning activities off from the rest of the group. The members did not know who the board was or what their plans were, and the board did not know the needs of the membership. This issue preoccupied the Association especially during deliberations to determine who would serve on the upcoming board. As a result, the president became an ex-officio member of the board concerned with establishing a national organization, and the former vice-president was elected president. It was outside the time frame of the study to determine formally the impact of the new president on the organization. However, informal reports indicated that the board was participating to a significantly greater degree with the president in group planning, and further that the membership was being consulted regularly to determine future meetings.

b. The Newsletter

The monthly newsletter is sent to all members. Its main purpose is to alert recipients to the upcoming general meeting, but it contains additional information designed in part to relate the topic to the philosophy of the Association.

The newsletter is typed on Association stationery, headed by the organization's logo which is the women's symbol enclosing two mothers talking to one another, followed by the words ASSOCIATION OF MOTHERS: PERSONAL ACTION IN MOTHERHOOD, with the organization's address. It is addressed in the form of a letter to "Dear Mother," which is followed by a description of the previous meeting, a description of the upcoming meeting, and the time, place and speaker for the meeting. It is signed by the president. In addition, the newsletter contains information about topic, location and time for upcoming neighborhood and board meetings. It may also include information about other group activities, such as a conference or garage sale and occasionally announcements concerning topics which are felt to be of interest to the members such as local classes on parenting or workshops on women.

The newsletter is written in an informal style, repeating the personal appeals and themes of shared experience found in the brochures. For example, a newsletter from December 1978 began:

> Dear Mother:
>
> This month we have a gift package for you--a special end of the year meeting which is entertaining, stimulating, and not too fattening. If you are like most mothers, you are probably in a very creative mood--especially about money. Our topic this month is "The Joy of Money: Recipes for Beating Inflation."

In addition to appeals and reference to shared experience, this letter attempts to 'feminize' what is considered to be a 'masculine' topic: money. The topic is related to what is considered an aspect of female (in this case 'mother') culture; food preparation, using words like "fattening" and "recipes."

Occasionally, newsletters will contain direct statements of the group's philosophy, such as the statement found in the March, 1979 newsletter:

> What is the Association? We are an organization dedicated to the woman who is creating a secure environment for her children and family while at the same time dealing with her own personal growth and development. Mothering need not be isolating or even frustrating. It's time we did something about making our motherhood experience meaningful rather than an endurance test!

The newsletter continues, stating that by participating in the Association, the reader will make friends who "share a precious common bond--motherhood." The topic for the next meeting, "The Wonderful, Wacky World of Motherhood," is then announced and discussed briefly.

c. General Meetings

General meetings are held on the second Monday evening of each month and are open to the public. For those who are not Annual members, a fee of $1.50 is charged. This fee makes an individual an Associate member and entitles her to attend that meeting and receive two newsletters. The audiences ranged in size from twenty to about fifty, of whom approximately one-third are usually attending for the first time. Over the course of the study, the audiences were almost exclusively female, Anglo and between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five. Children and men are not welcome at general meetings and none were observed present.

According to several Board members, the setting and time of the general meetings is deliberately planned. Aspects of the physical setting have already been described. The meetings are deliberately planned to take advantage of Monday Night Football. Since babysitting is intentionally not provided at the meeting, it is assumed that the fathers at home will care for the children. According to one newsletter, general meetings are a time to "leave the dishes in the sink," a time out for mother. While this tactic has led some to fruitful dialogue between husband and wife concerning the worth of attending Association meetings, it does not facilitate attendance for single mothers.

Meetings are scheduled to begin at 7:30, but as one informant noted, "mothers are notoriously tardy." Usually, people arrive by themselves or in groups of two and three, starting about 7:30. The meetings never begin before 8:00. This time before the formal opening of the meeting is important because it gives members a chance to renew acquaintances not seen since the last meeting. A great deal of social exchange of personal information took place during this half hour. It is almost the only time during which a newcomer (or anyone else) is able to meet and talk with people on an informal basis.

The president, or in her absence the vice president, begins the meeting. In one case the president gavelled the meeting to order. The remainder of the meetings began informally. The format for the meetings follows a conscious and deliberate design, and consequently all meetings are similar. First, the president welcomes the audience, makes announcements concerning group organization and conducts any other business at hand. Second, she introduces the topic for the evening, usually relating the content to the overall theme of the shared experience of motherhood. Third, she or the Program Chair introduces the speaker. After a presentation of approximately an hour, the speaker asks the audience to break into small groups. The Board feels this aspect of the format to be important, so most speakers are instructed beforehand to follow it. The small groups are asked to solve a problem relating to the topic, to conduct a task, or in some other way to interact with each other concerning the topic which has been presented. This part of the meeting usually lasts about fifteen to twenty minutes, at which time the president asks that the small groups "report back" to the group at large. A spokeswoman is appointed from each small group and she reports to the audience at large what occurred in that group. Depending on time, these reports usually result in an exchange between different groups, and between the groups and the speaker. The meetings usually end between 10:00 and 10:30.

During the course of the study the following general meetings were observed. Included are identifying features of the speakers, as described in the newsletters or as they were introduced:

October, 1978
Title: A Loving Family: Who Makes it that Way?
Topic: Using Transactional Analysis to understand "family configurations"
Speakers: Husband and wife team who run a "private counseling service and have seven kids between them."
Attendance: 35-40

November, 1978
Title: The Significance of Public Policy Issues for You and Your Family
Topic: "Most of us are home with our children and rarely have an opportunity to discuss our concerns with our public officials in person."
Speaker: County Commissioner, mother of four children
Attendance: 23

December, 1978
Title: "The Joy of Money: Recipes for Beating Inflation"
Topic: How we as mothers use money, attitudes toward money, investments
Speaker: Woman banker, woman stockbroker
Also present was a toy display from local toy shop and refreshments made by "an M.A. in Nutrition."
Attendance: 40

January, 1979
Title: Ups and Downs: Orchestrating Your Moods
Topic: "Help us in our understanding of human consciousness and development, learning a deeper understanding of ourselves."
Speaker: Director of psychotherapy
Attendance: 45

February, 1979
Title: Childbirth: A Panel Discussion on Attitudes, Methods, Facts, and Opinions
Topic: To highlight the right and responsibility of each mother to choose the method of delivery
Speakers: Two doctors, one R.N., lay midwife, three Association members
Attendance: 55

March, 1979
Title: The Wonderful, Wacky World of Motherhood
Topic: Discussion of some of the more hectic moments of mothering

Speaker: Author, local radio personality and speaker
Attendance: 28 (Note: a tornado watch had been posted; weather was very poor. Speaker has spoken before to 50-60 members.)

Comparing the above list of topics to presentations given in the past, this series is a representative sample of range and type of issues covered in general meetings. The attendance was fairly stable, with some fluctuation. The low attendance at the meeting with the county commissioner, a popular and colorful local figure, was explained by several board members as being due to the lack of "political" interest in the group. The low attendance for the last meeting was due to poor weather; it was very threatening and some remarked that it was a credit to the speaker that so many were present.

Meetings concerning birth, family communication, time management at home, and "my ideal self" have been held over the past years. It should be noted that there is a conspicuous lack of programs concerning home management for the single working mother, divorce, the concerns of ethnic and minority mothers, or topics which reflect current political, economic, or legal redress for poor mothers. In other words, little attention is given to the concerns that would arise from changes in family structure, changes in women's participation in the work force, or class and ethnic pluralism in this society.

d. Neighborhood Meetings

Neighborhood meetings are held on the fourth Monday evening of each month and are open only to Annual members. FACS researchers did not attend any meetings and this report relies on members' descriptions. At the time of the study two neighborhood groups were operating, Northwest and South; the North group was no longer meeting. They are usually attended by about fifteen people, and meetings are held in members' homes. As described by both Northwest and South members, the neighborhood meetings tend to attract the same group of people; they are well acquainted with each other and the atmosphere is informal.

According to board members, neighborhood groups are designed to provide an atmosphere of increased intimacy and sustained contact. As the South coordinator put it, "You have more of an opportunity to share and everybody will talk." Members usually gather at the selected home at about 7:30. Refreshments are served and there is social exchange among friends.

The neighborhood coordinators are formally responsible for selecting the topics for the meetings. Topics that members are interested in discussing are decided in advance, and Coordinators plan accordingly either by finding a guest speaker, or a member who has had experience in the area to lead a discussion.

The South group did not usually rely on outside speakers, but instead members were responsible for leading the discussion. During the course of the study, the following topics were covered at South neighborhood meetings:

October: Mother-Witch vs. The Little Monster: How to Discipline without damaging a child's self-esteem.
November: A fun thing to do--new simple-to-make decorating ideas for Christmas. Guest speaker, crafts expert
December: No meeting
January: Teaching Your Baby to Read/cancelled
February: Teaching Your Baby to Read
March: No meeting.

Northwest neighborhood meetings were similar in format and organization but were described by both northwest and south members as being more "formal." "South we just wear jeans and sit around and visit." Northwest usually has a speaker and there is not the "closeness." The topics for the Northwest group were the following:

October: "Women as Friends?..."
November: What can you tell from your child's art? Guest speaker, expert in interpretation of child's art
December: No meeting
January: Problems Mothers Have with Their Mothers. Guest speaker
February: Recipe Swap, with guest speaker, M.A. in Nutrition
March: No meeting

e. The Board Meetings

Board meetings normally were held once a month, scheduled for ten in the morning. During the course of the study, board meetings were not held regularly and the location changed each time there was a meeting.

The time for the meetings, 10:00 a.m., made it difficult for the two board members who worked outside the home to attend, but was convenient for the rest of the board who had young children in nursery school in the morning. The presence of children was discouraged during board meetings, but since a number of the board members had very young children, usually at least one or two children were present.

The president initiated the meetings informally and usually proceeded with a written agenda for the meeting. Discussion tended to stray from the planned schedule and frequently discussions of topics achieved no closure, either formal or informal. As long as people sustained interest in a topic, discussion continued. Only rarely did the president formally close a topic. Instead it was discussed until no one had anything else to say or until another board member commented that too much time had been spent on a topic.

During the study, several main areas of discussion were brought up at each board meeting. These were:

1) Finding a new location for the general meetings

2) The Association Conference, sponsored by the organization but legally and organizationally separate from it, held in March, 1979

3) The selection of the new board, elections in March, 1979

Of the three areas, the issues surrounding the selection of the new board are of most interest to this study. As was mentioned before, a number of board members publicly at board meetings and privately in interviews or informal conversations expressed concern over what they felt was the president's excessive control over most facets of the organization.

During the study, conflicts between the president and the Board concerned all board members because they feared that no one would be willing to serve on the new board. During the December board meeting, with the president absent, no one was willing to serve on the next board given the present conditions. The problem was solved at a special meeting called at a member's home when the president was out of town in mid January. A number of board members aired concerns and complaints against the president, and the current vice president agreed to become the new president. Those board members who were questioned about it said that this step was crucial to the continuation of the organization. As soon as one person was willing to commit herself to the new board, with the public backing of a majority of the board, a number of other members rapidly volunteered to serve on the next board. A full slate was ultimately elected.

There is a considerable difference in members' and leaders' perceptions of the different components of the organization. To members, the structure and goals of the organization are fairly "vague." They express little or no awareness of who all the Board members are or what the board is planning (except for information that is reported in the newsletter). When an Annual or Associate member goes to a general meeting, she is not aware of who selected the topic, why it was selected, what occurred at the board meeting where it was announced. Her experience in the organization is limited to a meeting with a particular topic.

From her point of view, she arrives at a general meeting and finds a group of young women who in appearance look very much like herself. She pays her dues (if she is an Associate), puts on a nametag and if she knows anyone she may go over and talk before the meeting starts. If not, she goes and sits in the chairs provided and waits. A woman, who announces herself to be the "President and Founder" of the Association makes a few business announcements, and then introduces the evening's speaker, saying how the topic relates to being a mother. The speaker talks for about an hour, then usually asks the group to break up into smaller groups to carry out a particular task pertaining to the topic of the lecture. If she knows no one in the Association, this more informal and personal grouping will be her first chance to talk directly with the others present. The small groups discuss the appointed topic, then report back to the main group. There may be interchange among audience members, or between audience and speaker, usually by those who seem to be regularly attending members. She leaves shortly thereafter, goes home, and talks to her husband about it if he will stay awake long enough.

This short composite scenario is typical of the members' experience at meetings. What they see and experience is far removed from the experience of those involved in running the organization. The experience of a member is much more informal, much more sporadic, and much less time consuming. One member said that she generally attends Association meetings

> ...for getting to know people, and being able to hear interesting topics being discussed that were relevant to motherhood. And by the time that I got into the Association, I was pretty active in several organizations and saw this one as one that I could go to and just enjoy and not take on any kind of leadership responsibilities.

To a large extent, the leadership is keenly aware of the differences between members and leaders in terms of program experience. It is assumed by some of the leaders that the members do not want to know about how the organization is run, what the long range philosophy is, or who runs it. According to these leaders, the members are attracted to the organization precisely because they do not have to participate; they come because the organization provides "fabulous meetings," or just a place where they can "come and receive," or come to "enrich themselves."

Alice, the president, expressed her understanding of what the membership wants in an interview:

> Well, as a mother, just because so...we're tired most of the time. And it just seems that there's so much asked of us as mothers and the things that are always being asked of us...is our time and our money. And that's what we have very little to give. And I did not want to be, knowing the situation, yet another group who ask for more time and more money from the same group of people who are always being asked.

She feels that the leadership and the membership have different "expectations" about the organization; that, for instance, while the leadership is interested in expanding the organization to the national level, the membership is concerned with attending "interesting meetings." She and other leaders feel that the group should provide, without effort to the mother, a place to go where she can meet other mothers and hear a lecture or panel of experts.

The difference in expectations expressed by a number of the board members represents a symbolic as well as a real separation between the board and the members. The members were not in a position to have input into the running of the organization, to change the organization to better fit their own needs, because they are not even aware of who they needed to approach in order to do so. Nor were their opinions solicited by the board. Further, the lack of contact between the board and the members contributed to misconceptions that the leaders had about what the group members wanted. For instance, during the study, the built-in informality of the organization, e.g., group discussions after lectures and intimate neighborhood meetings, began to break down. Small group discussion at general meetings stopped, the northside neighborhood group stopped meeting, and a number of members expressed to FACS researchers a lack of personal contact with other members. So, while the board members persisted in thinking that there were two "agendas," one to develop national projects, the other to continue running the local "personal support group" for mothers, the second agenda was perhaps not being met as well as the first.

In summary, elements of the organizational structure, including a board with thirteen positions, general meetings, board meetings, and a newsletter as regular activities, are patterned after a professional bureaucratic model. This use of a business model to build an organization designed to upgrade the status of motherhood from a low status domestic (female) task to a high status public (male/professional) career is symbolic of the tensions in society to which the Association responds.

6. Recruiting New Members

Alice, founder of the Association, flatly states that her organization does not recruit. In the following statement, she summarized the ideological stance of the group:

> We don't recruit. The mothers who come to the meetings are there because they want to be there. To recruit seems to us that we try to get people to come to something. And we don't feel we need to try. We feel, we do have as I say 75 to 90, 100 people at a meeting. If we had four it would be a successful meeting. The main thing is that you're there because you want to be there and you like to hear what other mothers have to say, you like the social situation, you like the friends, you like the laughter, you like the intelligent speakers. And you'll be there. If you're not there, either you haven't heard of it...or you don't want to be there because you feel you don't need it, or not that we think it is a need since it's not a self-help group. It's a knowledge-imparting group.

This confirms earlier assertions that the group is something that is there for mothers to come to at their convenience. The concept of recruiting seems distasteful, suggesting that people have to be coerced into attending. Alice seems to suggest that the group is a smorgasbord, from which interested individuals may pick and choose at will. If they do not come, then that is their choice.

However, the organization does in fact recruit, what Alice calls "what we do about people who just haven't heard of it." They use posters, brochures, word of mouth, advertisements in the local newspaper, occasional articles in the paper, and local TV talk shows. Alice and other leaders have made occasional presentations publicizing the Association to other groups or organizations. There are sporadic membership drives, including one the year before the study in which they set up a booth in a local shopping center mall and handed out brochures and posters.

Brochures distributed at shopping centers or doctors offices include a list on the front page which is intended to appeal to women who have these characteristics. This list is also used occasionally in other documents. The front page of the brochure gives the name of the Association, then spells out in large letters "IS FOR YOU:

if you enjoy your role as a mother
if you like to talk to other mothers
if you want to learn about things that affect you as a mother
if you like working with a professional, successful organization
if you need a night out
if you want to enrich your conversation with all adults
if you need to do something just for you
if you're looking for stimulating conversation."

Not all these public relations strategies are equally as successful. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the homogenous nature of the group, the most successful strategy is word of mouth. When asked on the survey, 54% of those who responded said that they had heard about the Association from a friend. The next most successful strategy was newspaper articles. Several have appeared in the "Life/Style" section of the local paper in the last two years; there have been lengthy stories of several columns including pictures. Based on response to the survey, 19% heard about the group from one of the newspaper articles. Posters were also fairly successful; 14% learned about the group from them. Noon TV talk shows attracted 9% of those responding. Brochures and talks by Association members to other organizations attracted only three respondents.

The recruitment strategy that was most successful, word of mouth, helps to maintain the boundaries of the group. Networks tend to follow lines of similarity. This particular strategy is well-adapted to a group which depends in part on self-selection to maintain the homogenous nature of the membership.

7. The Construction of the Association--The Meaning of Motherhood

Not surprisingly, board members individually articulate the philosophy of the organization to a much greater degree than the general membership. All board members who were interviewed stated that "support" was the main goal of the group. Although it is frequently repeated, this phrase is imprecise. One board member expressed it this way:

> It's sort of a support group for mothers. It's an organization where mothers can come and share experiences, whether it's about mothering or just about self development. It's an opportunity where they can get together with other mothers and share.

Though of obvious importance to the leaders as a way of describing the organization, the concept of "support group" was never clearly defined. We can speculate about its possible meanings based on the contexts in which it was used. The term "support," was used in conjunction with terms such as: "sharing, shared experience, commonality, interaction, talk to each other, air problems, you're not the only one who feels this way, some sort of inner support." The president gave an extended explanation of support:

> ...A person telling me that their child is the same and this is the kinds of things they do...not as a professional, as another mother. It means much more to me...because she knows. She's been the one who has stayed up all night. She's been the one whose teenager all of a sudden has started going to parties and she doesn't know where he is. She's doing it. She's right there in it and reacting and acting on the situations as they arise and finding the wrong answers and the right answers...[she's] having the

> same anxiety, the same fears, the same hopes, the same joys as you are.... It's more real. You believe it.

"Support group" does not describe the Association either structurally or organizationally. Instead, it expresses in a diffuse manner a philosophical stance, using language derived from recent psychology and particularly from the women's liberation movement.

The adaptation of a phrase popularized by the women's liberation movement indicates an uneasy symbolic relationship between the Association and women's liberation. In addition to the term "support group" the Association uses the women's symbol (♀) as part of its logo, and the front page of the brochures are decorated with a dozen or more women's symbols, although the symbols are in pink and interspersed with flowers. As speakers for the organization, the leaders explicitly reject the current women's liberation movement, and in part blame the influence of that movement for degrading housewives, homemakers, and mothers, or at the very least, ignoring them. Women's liberation and the cultural changes that have resulted from it, such as increasing acceptance of women in the paid workforce, are attributed with having further lowered the status of motherhood.

What is of interest here is that the Association, even though rejecting the tenets and influence of women's liberation, has adopted one of its most prominent characteristics. While "support group" has gained limited parlance in the general middle class, its association with women's liberation is strong. Its adoption by the Association indicates important similarities between the groups. The Association, like women's liberation, is primarily Anglo, middle-class, female, and emphasizes "professionalism." Women's liberation has been successful in recruiting women and affecting them in some way, a feature the Association seeks to emulate. It has also encouraged upgrading the status of women. And finally, women's liberation is a social movement which uses "support groups" as a method of affecting women's perceptions of themselves. The leaders recognize one aspect of change in its logo: "Personal Action in Motherhood," an ambiguous phrase suggesting activism, but for personal (not social) gain. While the organization is not a social movement, it is trying to accomplish change through reinforcing the chosen role of its members (motherhood) by upgrading the status of that role from a private maligned experience to a public, "professional," respected career.

Another part of the philosophy of the group is "enhancing a woman's self development." This secondary goal, to "develop the mother person," was expressed by only about half the board members in interviews. There was agreement among all the board members that the concept of "support" represented the basic philosophy of the group. However, there was conflict between leaders who felt that focus on the "mother as a person" was important and those who did not hold that view. In general, those leaders including the president, who felt self-development was a group goal were more concerned that the group be "professional," and that it not be, for example, a "stereotypical ladies group" with bake sales.

The members who were interviewed were less articulate about the philosophy or goal of the group than the board members. For those who did articulate a philosophy, the most frequently expressed goal appears to be concern with the "mother as a person," or phrased differently, with the general self-development of the mother. Within the group of members who assume that this is the goal of the Association, about half are concerned with "raising the status of motherhood" while the others feel that the group is there to provide "time out," time away from home and children. About one third of the members interviewed articulate in more diffuse terms the goal which the leadership calls "support." These members tend to use a different language to describe what appears to be the same goal. For example, whereas all the board members use the phrase "support group," a member will say the group is "for the mother at home to realize she is not alone."

Most members say that the goal of the Association is mainly self-development or more time out, while the leaders feel the main goal of the group is "support." While a number of members agree that support is a goal of the organization, it is much less clearly or frequently mentioned. The contrast between the two groups suggests that those in leadership position, who have been with the group longer, and who are more intimately involved in group activities, including program presentation, newsletters, and recruitment, have learned the language of the group. The consistency in terminology with which the leadership describe "support" suggests that an important difference between goals of leaders and members may be due to greater socialization into the group. Members have not learned to articulate their experience in the same way. Learning of a common "language" to describe experiences may be very important to this group, first as a badge of belonging and second as a way to apprehend, explain and communicate a shared experience, that of being a modern middle class Anglo mother.

a. Group Boundaries

While shared language may contribute to consistent definitions of the group's goals, the philosophy of the Association was also used to distinguish between those in the group and those outside it. Program philosophy and goals were used to help define the boundaries of the group which, in addition to the physical setting, is used to maintain group homogeneity, and to determine who is 'us' and who is 'them.'

Positive, inclusive definitions of the Association have already been touched upon, namely that the group is "professional" and is for mothers. The marked use of the term "mothers" should be noted here. It was used in talks before meetings with the intent of establishing what all members share. "Mothers" was often capitalized in the newsletters; speakers were often described as being effective not because they had certain qualifications, but because they were "mothers." Throughout the transcripts, interviews, and documents "mothers" is clearly a special term with symbolic meaning beyond its normal usage.

Aspects of the symbolic meaning of the term "mother" are derived from the general philosophy of the organization and an articulation of the shared values which pertain to childrearing in the professional middle class. There is one feature of this somewhat curious use of the term "mother," however, which has immediate bearing on understanding the organization. The fact of being a mother, of motherhood, of mothering, has characterized the role of women across societies and through time. It has been, and in most cultures is, one of the most salient roles played by women. It is for most women an ascribed rather than an achieved status. Child-bearing and rearing may be something that they do in addition to or along with other productive and reproductive work, but it is something that they almost invariably do. Motherhood "happens" to them, whether they choose it or not. For the women of the middle to upper-middle class in the U.S., cultural and technological possibilities now exist for them to select motherhood: thus, it has become to a greater degree an achieved status.

There are several implications of this cultural change in access to the mother status for the organization. Given the fact that most women in most societies become mothers, "mothers" is at its most basic level a universalistic category. It is non-restrictive in its application because it can and does refer to adult women of all religions, colors, and classes. It is possible to envision an organization which focused on this universal aspect of motherhood, an organization which used motherhood as common ground to bring together women of very diverse backgrounds and interests. Instead, the Association focuses on the "achieved" aspects of this role, selecting out a "special group" of mothers, making this descriptive term exclusive rather than universal. Instead of focusing on motherhood as a way to create, for instance, a political action group with solidarity among women who share that one characteristic but differ on others, the organization takes the designation of "mother" and redefines it. The way the Association uses the term, it is a marked category referring to a selected group of women.

Taking a general designation and making it particularistic is reflected in certain practices of the organization. These include the physical boundary maintenance devices such as colored name tags at meetings, member segregation according to types of membership, different check points, and different access to meetings. These and other boundary devices are marshalled in an attempt to identify, attract, define, enclose, and reinforce one group of mothers out of the total population which would otherwise be available, a select group of middle class Anglo mothers who share some characteristics.

While "mothers" is the most prominent device which designates who the organization includes, negative or exclusive terms are used as well. For example, there was concern expressed by some leaders that the Association NOT be a "ladies group." Repeatedly, the leaders and especially the president, described the group as often by exclusion as by inclusion. The organization was described as NOT a "volunteer group, a community group, an encounter group, religious group, political group, a parenting group, a women's liberation group, a therapy group, or a self-help group, or not average housewives."

When the inclusive categories or types of groups are compared to the explicit or implicit exclusive categories/groups, a picture of the Association from the point of view of the leadership begins to emerge. The following chart summarizes this information in terms of contrast between "us" (the Association) versus "them" (other [women's] groups). It represents the contrastive characteristics of what might best be called the ideal organization that the leaders are trying to create and maintain:

Table A
Characteristics of the Association According to its Leaders

US		THEM
professionally run group	vs.	volunteer group ladies group bake sales
non-political	vs.	ERA women's liberation community action group
knowledge-imparting (pedagogical)	vs.	self-help group therapy group encounter group
non-denominational	vs.	religiously-based group
successful	vs.	unsuccessful (have to recruit)
focus on the mother-person	vs.	parent education group (focus on the child)

This ideal "professional" organization is expected to match with what we might call the ideal "professional" mother, essentially the inclusive and exclusive characteristics attributed by the leaders to the members. As might be expected in an organization which was founded by its participants, there is considerable 'fit' between the characteristics attributed to the organization and the participants, e.g., both the mothers and the Association are described as "professional," "middle class."

Table B
Characteristics of the Participants According to the Leaders

US		THEM
professional mother	vs.	the average housewife
homemaker/full time/stay at home mother	vs.	career/working woman
affluent/middle class	vs.	working, poor
white	vs.	Black, Mexican American
married/supported	vs.	single/divorced/unsupported
looks good/together	vs.	sloppy
well-educated	vs.	poorly educated
sharp, intelligent	vs.	not interested in issues
articulate	vs.	hasn't thought about, planned, considered

The special usage of the term "mother," and the use of special traits to describe the Association and its members, is part of a process of boundary definition remarked upon in the anthropological literature which uses both terms of exclusion as well as inclusion as group boundary devices (Barth, 1969). The problem for this group, like others, is to maintain a group boundary in the face of repeated contact with others who may or may not be different. This is further complicated when the pool of potential members is not homogeneous but instead may share one feature and differ on many others. The necessary shared feature in this case is of course the biological fact of motherhood, but it is elevated to the level of symbol as "mother" which is used to describe what the group *is*. The use of comparisons which describe what the Association *is not* in combination with features which describe what the Association *is* represents a primary technique used by the leadership to maintain the boundaries of their organization. The use of inclusive and exclusive terms to maintain the boundary of the group recurs frequently in a number of contexts, formal and informal, and are expressed primarily by board members to describe the characteristics of the Association and the participants.

In addition to spontaneous descriptions, the leaders were also asked by the researchers to comment on the make-up of the group which appeared to be limited to one ethnic group and one class. According to one board member, the organization's members are "a special group of mothers." She describes them as being financially secure, able to afford staying home, and having worked at a "professional" job before stopping work to have children. She says that the Association would not appeal to mothers who did not share these characteristics, people who had "diverse backgrounds." The members are described as being homogeneous by the leaders and are usually attributed with being white middle class, well-educated, with a prior career but currently a "homemaker and mother." These are the people to whom the organization is expected to appeal. They are a group which, as the leaders say, "share the same values."

In these descriptions there is a sense that these shared characteristics do not represent the essence of what it means to be a "special group of mothers," nor what the shared values may be. One leader suggests that the specialness derives not only from background, but also from a middle class kind of 'style:'

> A member is professional and kind of hip. Somebody who's kind of with it. Looks good. No slobs. Nobody that's not well-groomed. 'Course, somebody who's articulate.

Another leader says:

> Most middle class women coming together in a group will tend to stick to the supermom image. That's good. We need that. We need to come and everyone continue to look pretty and together.

While the elements of style of those who join may capture some aspects of what is shared by the group, other distinctive facets of the group are revealed by looking at leaders' descriptions of those who do not participate. A number of leaders commented that ethnic minority and low income mothers were not excluded from the group, but that they would not come because they would not be interested in such an organization. The various explanations that were offered as to why ethnic minority mothers would not be interested in the Association provides some clarification as to the values and boundaries of the group. One of the leaders explained the lack of participation by ethnic minority mothers this way:

> I think the difference is that the Black mother is still worried and lives on a day to day basis. And she doesn't have time to think about the things that we talk about, because she's worried about is she going to get a check this month, is she going to feed her kids, you know. And it's getting cold, she doesn't have a jacket for the kids. What is she going to do about all these subsistence things. That is if she's home at all with her kids. You know, she may be working, in which case she has even less time to spend on a group like this.

A number of other leaders expressed similar sentiments.

Two salient characteristics of her perceptions of Black mothers emerge from this statement. First, this member of the Association thinks that Black mothers are on welfare (the "check"). Since welfare is subsistence level, a Black mother's main concern will be to feed and clothe her children. Second, she thinks that if the Black mother is not on welfare, she is not home taking care of the kids because she is working.

One may conclude from this that the reason Black mothers do not come to the Association is because they are not supported by a husband (they work or are on welfare).

It should be clear that this leader is not talking about ethnic differences at all, but instead is talking about class differences. Working class or poor women do not exhibit traditional middle class family structure and values, and they would therefore not be interested or have the time to participate. It is automatically assumed that ethnic minority mothers are working or supported by the state.

The most salient distinction made by the Association is in terms of class and not in terms of ethnicity although they seem automatically to relegate other ethnic groups to a different class. The primary audience for the group, and the main reference group for the structure, values, and tools of the organization is the middle class. However, these characteristics do not capture the essential value that middle class mothers have held in the U.S. for at least the last 150 years: that they view what they are doing as a more important task than do other mothers. Middle class mothers see themselves as crucial to the future of the country: they have the power to raise the next generation, and the responsibility to see that they rear the leaders and good citizens for the future. The responsibilities that these middle class mothers feel are great, responsibilities which they do not see being shared by mothers of other classes. As one leader clearly put it:

> You asked why there weren't more lower income mothers. I'm not sure that they share that feeling that they're raising the future generation. I think to many of those people, at least my experience is...to them being pregnant and having a baby was as ordinary an event as

> sitting down and having dinner on Tuesday night. It wasn't something that they thought about.

The felt importance of being a "mother" elevates the task to a level commensurate with the education and occupational background of the members of the group: it turns it into "professional" motherhood.

b. The Corporate Business Model

The ideology of the group can best be understood in terms of the inclusive and exclusive characteristics attributed by the leadership to the organization and the participants. These attributions take the form of contrasting characteristics of organizations and individuals. These general defining features of the organization as expressed by the leadership are shown in Table C.

Looking at Table C, we are in a position to specify more clearly who "them" is, and by contrast to better understand the relationship between the Association and the rest of the middle class. The features which are attributed to "them" are characteristics traditionally associated with women's middle class volunteer organizations, or what will be termed here the "Female Committee Model." Organizations of this type use volunteers; they are oriented towards action or service in the community; they may or may not be religiously based; they are almost exclusively female and may be concerned with or of benefit to families and children. In distinct contrast, the features which characterize the Association are traditionally attributed to business or professional organizations, traditionally run and dominated by men, what will be called here for contrasting purposes the "Male Business Model." They are organized, efficient, hierarchical, and have a business structure. These organizations contrast sharply with the female committee model described above. The anomaly of the Association is that it is concerned

Table C
Inclusive and Exclusive Traits Attributed to the Organization and the Members by Association Leaders

TRAITS	US (The Association)	THEM (Other Women's Organizations)
Efficient	Yes	No
Organized	Yes	No
Hierarchical	Yes	No
Businesslike	Yes	No
Successful	Yes	No
Volunteer Community Model	No	Yes
Community Service	No	Yes
Political Action	No	Yes
Religious	No	Yes
Child Focus	No	Yes
Problem-solving	No	Yes

Yes = Primary Goal/Objective/Characteristic

No = Not Primary Goal/Objective/Characteristic

with and directed by a class of person most closely associated with the Female Committee Model, the full-time, stay-at-home mother.

In order to understand this contradiction, we need to look at the current social and political context in which middle class women find themselves. In very general terms, married middle class women have had several "choices" open to them which it will be argued are not really equally desirable at all because of the differential status associated with each. They can choose 1) motherhood, 2) a career only, or 3) motherhood and a career. Number One until very recently was the only acceptable path open to a middle class woman, and in this case her status would be derived from her husband's. If his status was high, hers would be high, and she was expected to perform certain functions, like hostessing, to further his career. Number Two was a less acceptable choice, since motherhood was considered the defining feature of the 'work' done by middle class women. Number Three was a possible choice, but made at the cost of a certain loss of status or respect, and could be maintained only if the woman did not neglect the primary job of being a 'good' mother.

Recent changes in the cultural climate, particularly the influence of the women's liberation movement and increasing necessity for women to work for wages, have affected the roles and associated status available to middle class women. First and most important, to derive status from that of one's husband has become less and less acceptable as more avenues open up for women to acquire status independently of their husbands. Options two and three have become increasingly viable alternatives. In those cases status is derived from either the career alone, or the combination of the career and one's ability to be a good mother at the same time ("superwoman"). This has placed the middle class woman who stays home to care for her children in a peculiar position: motherhood is a low status 'occupation' (pink collar), and it is more difficult now to raise her status by deriving it from her husband's work. She becomes, ipso facto, by the act of bearing children and staying home to care for them, a low status person. The establishment of the Association based on a high status (male) business model is an attempt by the leaders to raise their status in one of the few ways available to them without renouncing the choice that they have made to be full-time mothers.

The majority of women who participate in the Association have made the "choice" to be full-time mothers. Given the relatively lower status of this choice, it is important to determine why it was made. In the most general terms, the women who participate made the "choice" to stay home because they expected it of themselves and in many cases because others, particularly husbands, expected it of them. As one interviewee who worked for ten years in merchandising before the birth of her first child simply put it: "I'd planned all along to stop working when I had my children and it was important to my husband." Another informant, who had worked as a social worker for a number of years before the birth of her two girls, stated:

> I'm happy to stay home now with them. You know, if I weren't, I'd be out getting a job. But I don't want to have a job because it's more important that I stay home with them.

Her statement captures the underlying ambivalence of many of the mothers; they are "happy" to stay home (a freely made, satisfying choice) but at the same time it is more "important" to stay home (forced choice). The Association appears to have arisen precisely to deal with the concerns of mothers who have stayed home and find that they are at least "kind of miserable," if not "severely depressed" with the result of their "choice."

The underlying message behind almost all informants' statements was that they felt strongly that they should stay home for the good of their children. Some mothers were very blunt in their opinions: "To me, the ideal is 'your children are yours.' If you don't want to take care of them, don't have them." It is clear that the value and importance of stay-at-home mothering is sufficiently powerful that these women, like the one above, have realistically felt very little "choice" in the matter. They have been raised to expect to stay home, their families expect them to, and they believe that they will not properly care for their children unless they do stay home full-time.

The result of this "choice" is that these mothers have experienced a loss of status. The mothers who come to Association meetings are in a peculiarly unpleasant situation because almost without exception, all had had careers or jobs prior to the birth of their child. The Association does not attract women who have never been waged; it tends to attract older mothers who have been in the workforce for anywhere from three to ten years. Their response to this loss of status is not to change their "decision," such as going back to work. Their response is to participate in an organization which emphasizes the "professional" nature of motherhood, which elevates the status of motherhood to make it more commensurate with their prior experience as working, professional women.

The response of the organization to this conflict is to adopt an ideology that is immanent within their class, the male professional/business model. However, because of the structure of the organization and the differential access that different participants have to it, the business model represents primarily the point of view of the leadership, and is rarely apparent if at all to the membership at large. The model of the Association as a male professional organization suggests the reason why leaders and members evaluate their participation differently, even though their personal concerns as mothers from the same class and ethnic group are quite similar.

B. Characteristics of the Participants

1. Number of Participants

The Association presents itself as an organization with 200 to 300 members, an assertion which was repeated formally and informally by the leaders

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in a number of different contexts. While this statement was clearly intended to enhance the reputation of the group by making it appear to be popular, it was only partially correct. One hundred eighty-eight people were listed on the mailing list; only 39% (73) of those were Annual members, including the leaders. The remainder were either people who only subscribed to the newsletter and/or had been to one general meeting. The mailing list is infrequently updated resulting in individuals being listed who had, for instance, attended one general meeting six months ago and not returned. It was imposible to control for this type of 'floating' membership. In fact, it only became apparent late in the study that one interesting aspect of the organization was the fluid nature of the participation. The Association as a group taps a 'reserve pool' of mothers living city-wide who may come to a meeting because the topic is appealing and then not come again for two years if at all. Approximately one-third of those attending any general meeting tended to be newcomers.

The following table presents the attendance to general meetings, neighborhood meetings, and board meetings respectively, as reported by respondents to a survey conducted by the FACS researchers.

2. Demographic Characteristics

The Association mailing list, including all three types of membership and the leaders, was used for a survey mailed by FACS researchers (See Appendix V). One hundred eighty-eight survey questionnaires were mailed out; sixty-eight or 36% were returned. The demographic characteristics presented are based on that survey. Of those returning the survey, 64% were Annual members, 7% were Associates, 10% were Subscribers, and 14% listed themselves as Not Members. Annual members were overrepresented in

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General Meetings

	Participant Attendance	
Frequency	Per Cent	Number
Every month	30%	21
Once every 2 months	17%	12
Once every 3 months	13%	9
Once every 4 months	7%	5
Once every 6 months	9%	6
Once a year	4%	3
Less than once a year		
Don't go	18%	12
		N = 68

Neighborhood Meetings

	Participant Attendance	
Frequency	Per Cent	Number
Every month	16%	11
Once every 2 months	11%	8
Once every 3 months	3%	2
Once every 4 months	1%	1
Once every 6 months	9%	6
Once a year	3%	2
Don't go	54%	38
		N = 68

Board Meetings

	Participant Attendance	
Frequency	Per Cent	Number
Every month	14%	10
Once every 2 months	3%	2
Once every 3 months	3%	2
Once every 4 months	1%	1
Don't go	76%	53
		N = 68

the sample of those returning the survey; thus the results and generalizations will reflect this sampling bias. The three classes of members are described together in this analysis, so the term "participant" will be used to convey this fact.

The average age of a woman participating in the Association was thirty-two years, though the age range in the organization is from twenty-three to fifty-two. Half of those responding were born in the state, four of whom were born in River City. On the average, the participants had lived in the city for seven and a half years. Almost all of the respondents were married to their first husbands; only one was divorced and two were separated; five were remarried. Almost all of those responding identified themselves as Anglo or white; three were Mexican-American; two indicated "other."

Very few of the participants had more than two children; the largest number of children in any family in the Association is four. In fact, the sample presents a "typical" U. S. middle class family pattern: 41% had one child; 54% had two children. Following another middle class pattern, the mothers participating in the organization tended to have children fairly late; the average age of the mother at the birth of the first child was twenty-seven. The children of the participants tended to follow regular two to three year spacing patterns. The eldest children averaged 4.8 years of age, the second child tended to be about two years of age.

The participants and their spouses tended to be very highly educated. For the participants, 21% had finished some college; 27% had B.A.s; 16% had completed some graduate work; and 30% had completed Master's degrees. Their husbands were even more highly educated: 14% had some college; 16% had B.A.s; 9% had some graduate work; 26% had Master's degrees; 16% had Ph.D.s; 7% M.D.s;

9% J.D.s.

All sixty-eight mothers responding to the survey reported having worked for pay at some point in their adult lives, but only thirty-one were currently working for pay. Of those thirty-one people, seven (7) were working full-time, while the rest worked part-time. The seven full-time waged workers represented only 10% of the total of those responding, but were not proportionally distributed by type of membership that they held. Three of the full-time workers were "not members;" two had Subscriber memberships, one was an Associate member. In other words, only one of these mothers, the Associate, had ever been to a meeting. The only Annual member who worked full-time was the Liaison Chair, who was included in the in-depth interviews as a member of the board. This relationship between available time and level of participation is what could be expected.

The occupations of the participants as reported in the survey for both former or current employment clustered in a limited number of areas. Education related jobs were the most frequently reported work, followed by health, technical and secretarial work. Husbands' reported occupations clustered primarily in banking and business, science, medicine, technical or educational careers.

Some differences emerge when the leaders and the members who were interviewed in-depth are compared to the general population of the Association as reported in the survey. In general, the women interviewed for this study matched the characteristics of the population in age and number of children. However, the leaders were different from the membership at large in two important ways: age of their children and occupational status. First, the leaders' children tended to be older than those of the rest of the membership.

The leaders' eldest children averaged 5.4 years; the members' children 3.4 years. The leaders' youngest children averaged 3 years, the members' 2 years. Second, while almost all leaders and members interviewed with the exception of the founder had paid jobs after marriage, there are differences between them in current paid work. Of those interviewed, 63% of the members were currently working for pay, mostly in home-based sales, all part-time. This is higher than the average of the total sample (44%). More importantly, this contrasts sharply with the leaders, of whom only two worked for pay: one part-time, one full-time.

This difference suggests that those in leadership positions with older children are more likely to have less demanding child care schedules and responsibilities, and their children may be cared for by others for at least part of the day. Further, most of the leaders are not working for pay. Thus, the leaders are closer to the 'ideal' type of member originally envisioned by the founder, the non-waged stay-at-home mother. Within that ideal group, they had more time available to devote to the organization, and therefore they assumed leadership positions.

C. Parental Concerns

1. Motivation to Participate

What did these women expect from participation in the Association of Mothers? What motivated them to go to the meetings? The in-depth interviews conducted with a random sample of participants revealed that there were two primary expectations which represent slightly different orientations but which are closely related. One of these expectations was to find a "support group," a phrase that recurs over and over again. The meaning of this term is not spelled out, and may be in part an artifact of experience within the group. This was the strongest and most frequent expectation that mothers expressed when asked about their initial participation in the group. Mothers wanted to meet other mothers with young children, to talk about "how it was affecting them." When asked what about the recruitment letter attracted her, one mother exclaimed, "Just knowing there was a group, a support group for mothers, because I had no friends, as such, that had kids at home." In addition to finding other women with children, some mothers also wanted to find women with similar values and life styles as themselves. Several had already gone to other organizations where mothers with young children went, and found these organizations lacking because the participants were too different from themselves.

> So I had belonged to the, you know, or taken the Lamaze, and they had...play groups and things like that. And I tried that out, but that did not work. It was, it was, uh, it really didn't work. It was really a very diverse group and they couldn't get people together....

Other women defined their expectations in a different way. They did not mention "support" as such, but rather they sought "intellectual and social stimulation," "social outlets," or "something to go to" outside the home. One woman wanted to "revive brain cells," These women tended to value the potential variety, or "diverseness," of the women they might meet through the Association.

> But I like to sit around and talk and listen to other people's ideas. It's amazing how they can be kind of diverse. Some women are just totally happy with just staying at home. I mean, not any outside activities at all. They've got a lot of fulfillment in that, and that's amazing to me because I've got to have something else going on. I'm not totally satisfied with just staying at home. I don't like that at all.

While a distinction is clear between these two orientations, both support from like-minded people and stimulation from different people can be seen as alternative responses to a shared value: stay-at-home mothering. It suggests that reinforcement of this traditional value can take two forms: emotional and practical reassurance that other mothers experience the same difficulties and second, an occasional break, or "time out," which will make the experience of full-time mothering more pleasurable or bearable. A number of interviewees stated they had both orientations, indicating that they are not only compatible, but even they may be two sides of the "shared values" coin.

A much smaller number of mothers also articulated a need to change their self-image and/or status through participating in the Association. An example of this orientation follows:

> I was very anti-group.
>
> ...But, I was going through a period there where being a mother, I said to somebody, 'I'm a mother.' It was almost like a putdown, 'Oh, you're a mother.' Or, 'Do you work?' I hate that question, do you work. And, 'No, I'm at home.' And I was just kind of looking for maybe a professional definition of what I did or a recognition of it, I don't know, which I think this group has.

This third kind of expectation includes the other two, both support and self-development.

Only two mothers indicated that they attended meetings of the organization because of a diffuse curiosity, rather than a sense of isolation and the expectation of meeting supportive and/or stimulating people.

2. Special Themes

This discussion of parental concerns will focus on the more negative aspects of these middle class mothers' experiences. It should be noted before continuing that not all aspects of the stay home status for these informants is negative. Without exception, the women who were interviewed expressed deep, intense or pleasurable love for their children; many talked about the joys of hugging, holding, and cuddling another human being who loved them so undividedly. Others talked about the pleasures of seeing the world "through a child's eyes" and the delight they felt in taking their children to different places and in watching them grow and change. A few mentioned that they enjoyed not being required to show up at an office at nine every morning, one of the tangential benefits of childrearing that they had not foreseen. There were positive elements to the relationships between mother and children reported by all the women who were interviewed. But the interests of this study necessitate a focus on the more negative aspects of their experience because it is precisely these which give life to the organization.

a. Isolation: The Social Context

Since the mothers who belong to the Association subscribe to the value of exclusive mothering, it is not surprising to find that as a group, virtually every participant mentioned a sense of personal isolation as a primary concern. A number of interviewees talked at great length about the problem.

There are no significant differences in the *way* members and leaders talk about isolation or in the preconditions which precipitate it; all the leaders and half the membership expressed concern with isolation. The difference in frequency of mention may be due to the increased level of participation of leaders. As with the use of the concept "support group," the leadership may have been more completely socialized into the language of the organization. Members may be learning from contact with the Association to code their experiences into shared language, and being able to talk about a shared experience in the same language may be one task accomplished by the organization.

A few mothers had recently moved to town before they joined the Association. They were isolated from the total community and needed to mobilize their personal resources to develop friendship and support networks as mothers. One respondent explained:

> ...I was more frustrated than the average person, because I had, when I came [to town] I was still breastfeeding and my child was five months old, and I had to get to know a whole new town, and social structure, and try to find out if I could get a job. I was pretty frustrated. So, when I heard about [the Association], it was really just perfect for me.

Another new arrival to town found that her Catholic church did not provide the network of friends that she had expected, so she joined the Association of Mothers. The feeling of isolation experienced by these women was frustrating, and they faced a difficult situation that they felt they had to overcome.

Another group of mothers had stopped working for pay before their first child was born. After a period of several months to a couple of years of staying at home with their infants, they felt as if they were "going out of their minds," that their happiness was confounded with psychological "turmoil" or that they had become very "depressed." The women who had stopped working to have children were somewhat caught by surprise by their feelings and tended to experience an internal imbalance. One mother who had worked for a number of years explains how she was taken aback by her experience after her first child was born:

> It's really a funny thing because I was so delighted--we had wanted children for years and had difficulty in con-

> ceiving. And so, you know, I was so ready for this in so many ways, and I was so happy. And yet, I was somewhat lost. All of a sudden, when [my child] was born, my life changed 100% instantly, and I wasn't really ready for that. And I, I experienced a very traumatic self-image problem, and, you know, just everything. And so for a period of time after he was born, I was really searching for, you know, organizations, people, friends, whatever, to kind of pull myself and put my life back together again. I just didn't realize, you know, to be so happy and yet in such a state of turmoil was a funny kind of situation.

Another woman who had worked for pay before giving birth explained the problem in this way:

> [The Association] is oriented toward women primarily, I'm generalizing - who have been educated - who have worked - who have consciously chosen to stay home exactly the way I did and yet once you're here you feel like you're doing what you want to do and yet you've been so stimulated for 23 years of your life and then all of a sudden, you have a void intellectually, socially, mentally, the whole bit and there's a need. Plus, there's so many other women who are working who are not - like I have no neighbors, none - who are at home - who are my age who have other children. And so, you're in four walls with two little kids and even though I will not - still will not work full-time, I needed something else.

Still another former job-holder said:

> I don't know, you don't exactly know what to, you know, I had never been home. And then be home with your child, it--and you're stranded. Because you thought you were going to have all this free time to roam and shop (laughs), and you don't. I mean, after I was driving home, that was something. Being home and being kind of miserable.

Other women, who did not specifically mention leaving a job as a contributing factor to their isolation, nevertheless experienced the same lack of friends and neighbors who were staying at home with their children. Their neighbors tended to leave every day for jobs and their old friends did not have children and couldn't relate to them as mothers. This sense of isolation generated for many a profound depression. They went through "low periods," they "got down," or they felt all "pent up." But most importantly they felt the lack of contact with people "in the same position." For example:

> I was at a low period right then. After having two children so closely together, and being so completely tied down and I felt like I was gonna go crazy if I didn't get out and meet some other women in the same position, you know, with children at home. And get some support.

One mother, the only full-time worker interviewed, was a single parent and said that she had plenty of single friends, but that she knew no other women with children.

> Within my own sphere, I find myself generally surrounded by single, aggressive women, and also single men. And I've found myself without any peer at all, as far as my parenting is concerned. None.

Most informants identified their sense of isolation, attributed it to a set of social circumstances, and experienced feelings ranging from mild unease to frustration to depression. One articulate and particularly introspective respondent elaborated on her own experience of isolation. She did not feel that she was without people to turn to, but rather that they did not understand what she was going through as a mother of young children.

> You know, isolation is the word I hear a lot and I don't really identify with that word. I never felt truly isolated although I was. I didn't know I was, you know, so I don't identify with that word. I had lots of friends, and I had lots of activities and things that I did. They just weren't stimulating. You know.
>
> ...They were the wrong kinds, so I was isolated in the sense that I was in the wrong set of circumstances for me at that point in time.
>
> ...I think a lot of the isolation is mental isolation, you know. You tend to--you isolate yourself from your husband because you feel that he maybe doesn't understand what it is you're going through with this new baby. And you isolate yourself from your family who, I think, frequently you get the strokes from grandmas that, why are you making such a big to do of this? This is part of life. We handled it, you know, and there's very little understanding frequently from that part of the family, so you isolate yourself from

> them. Mentally, you know. You probably still talk on the phone, but maybe you don't talk about what's bothering you. And, you know, I was on the phone constantly. I was always talking to friends or going shopping with them or having them over and, you know--but it was still, it was an isolation within myself.

There are three preconditions for isolation experienced by this particular group of mothers: 1) lack of social contact; 2) role expectations of significant others; 3) conflict between expectations and experiences.

Lack of social contact was most often precipitated by changed job status. Many informants mentioned losing contact with former colleagues, most of whom were single or non-parents, thereby losing the one avenue of regular daily contact with adults which had been available to them. Further, they found that other mothers were not staying at home like themselves; neighbors tended to work during the day with the children in day care, leaving them and their children alone. Mobility also severed social contact for these mothers by locating them in areas where they had little or no family. According to the survey only 27% of the participants had any relatives in the area. As a consequence they had no resources within the family in terms of child-care, and by choice they seldom turned to family members for advice. In addition, moving disrupted friendship networks; often just moving across town was sufficient to discourage regular contact between previous friends or neighbors.

Conflicting role expectations were often expressed in terms of failure of the husband and of other waged women to appreciate the amount of time and effort required to be a full-time mother. A number of informants discussed problems with their husbands who complained of unwashed dishes, who ceased helping with the housework when the women stopped participating in waged work, or who were generally unsupportive or uncooperative. Some mothers found this to be the case with their own mothers as well, who expressed the feeling that this was women's lot and that they had done it without complaining. Husbands and others in the waged labor force did not see the stay-at-home mother as a worker with a job to do. In fact in many cases the mothers felt that they were perceived as not working at all. One case of conflict in expectations, from one woman's own mother, was that she felt she was expected to and expected herself to be able to cope with the stresses of full-time motherhood by drawing on internal resources, rather than turning to outside supports such as day care, grandmothers, sisters, or other people. Finally, there is a conflict between expectations and the actual experience of motherhood; mothers expected themselves to be full-time, responsible, affectionate mothers, and when they found that this was difficult, their reluctance to seek outside or shared care left them forced to solve their problems by themselves.

b. The "Endurance Test:" Full-Time Motherhood

The state and feelings of "isolation" described by the informants represent the first half of these mothers' problems. Isolation, a term which describes an unsupportive social context, tends to produce feelings of depression, loss of self-confidence, loss of "identity." The second half of the problem, full-time motherhood, further intensifies the mother's feelings that she must raise the "perfect child" who will justify the amount of time, effort, and suffering that she has invested. This adds to the negative feelings already discussed.

Full-time motherhood is a relatively recent value in childrearing and is related to the same conditions which lead to the isolation of the mother and child within the single family dwelling. Mothers in this culture are expected (and expect themselves in most cases) to be continually responsible for their children. They are also expected to do nothing but childrearing most of their adult lives. Whiting and Child (1953), in a review of the anthropological literature on childrearing, have shown that virtually no other society can afford to allow women in their most economically and socially productive years to spend all their time raising children. They are needed for other vital tasks in addition to or sometimes instead of the care of children. In contrast, if a woman in this culture becomes a mother, she expects to give up her other pursuits and devote herself wholly to the care of her children, "twenty-four hours a day for eighteen years," as one informant put it.

All the members and some board members expressed a need for "a little free time," "sneaking my own time," "getting out," or "getting away." Motherhood was seen as something that was so demanding that one mother felt "if I don't get out and do something for myself, they'll find me in the bathroom." There were three factors mentioned by informants which made full-time mothering an "endurance test:" 1) full-time housecare, "the routine;" 2) full-time child-care, "responsibility;" and 3) disruption of pursuits which were distinct from mothering, "my own time." These are not mutually exclusive since informants often mentioned being concerned with more than one of these factors, but they were usually talked about in discrete terms.

Full-Time Housecare: "The Routine"

One informant, the mother of two children ages five and one and a half, who was particularly concerned with the frustration generated by the routine of housework and child-care described it this way:

> I hate the drudgery, the constant wiping, cleaning, washing, nagging, the constant training because it has to go on over and over and over again. This is a constant, constant struggle.

Other mothers were also concerned with the routine of child care and cleaning; the repetitiveness of the tasks led them to feel that life was very "limiting." Like the mother cited above, another mother with a four year old and a one and a half year old whose husband did not participate to a great degree in housework said:

> It's getting better where I can stay at home all day. But, I find it very, very frustrating to get up and think, Oh God, I've got to go through the clothes in the machine, I've got to do this garbage again. The routine of getting up and looking at the same people every day and doing the same thing.

The routine of housework and the constant repetitive drudgery of cleaning and washing may be of particular concern to this group of women. They have all worked for wages outside of the home prior to the birth of their children. Most subscribed to recent cultural changes in the dictum that housework is 'women's work.' However, marital conflict arose when husbands ceased doing any housework at the birth of the first child. When both husband and wife were working outside the home for pay, the husbands were reported to have participated in cleaning, cooking, and washing up. But, after the birth of the first child, and the exit of the women from the paid labor force, the women were expected (and often expected themselves) to have exclusive care of the house as well as the children. Unwashed dishes at the end of the day came to represent to several husbands that the wife and mother was not doing her "job" properly. Women who had previously shared housework with their husbands, more characteristic of the current middle class than the working class, may be most particularly prone to feeling frustrated with sole responsibility for housework.

In addition to husbands' ceasing to participate, the repetitive nature of housework was frustrating because as a group, the mothers had previously done more varied, less repetitive jobs. Of the two mothers cited above, one had gotten a graduate degree in science and had been teaching. The other was an English teacher who had traveled and taught in Europe and in several states in the U. S. in the seven years between marriage and childbirth.

The association of housework with child care, and the expectation that stay-at-home mothers will also be full-time housekeepers suggests that full-time mothering is not considered by either the mothers or fathers to be a 'real' job. Many mothers expressed guilt over their inability to keep their houses clean while at the same time being a full-time mother, and reported that their husbands resented this as well. This suggests that, irrespective of what the mothers may say, they do not feel that full-time care of children is sufficiently demanding or time-consuming to excuse their failures to perform additional tasks.

Full-Time Child-Care: The Responsibility

A second area of concern related to full-time mothering is the feeling of being overburdened by the full-time responsibility for one or more children. These mothers, having a middle class orientation, do accept the value of full-time child care, and most of them explicitly confirmed how important it was for them to be home with their children. The acceptance of this value, however, creates stress in their lives. As one mother said, "You're on call twenty-four hours a day for eighteen years and so it's no escape.... The responsibility of those lives is the hardest [thing]."

Other members expressed the same concern over responsibility, or "dependency," as one mother termed it.

These women expect themselves to be full-time mothers and apparently their husbands and families expect this of them as well. But at the same time, they feel burdened by the full responsibility for the children and house. There is a fundamental conflict in values represented by these concerns. They feel that they "choose" to stay home, but in fact feel constrained; they feel both isolated and frustrated by exclusive full-time mothering. As a response to this conflict they have to work at learning how to stay home; as a mother quoted above said, "It's getting better where I can stay home all day." Their only real alternative is to learn to stay home, and further to learn to like it.

Personal Care: "My Own Time"

"Getting away" from either house and/or children is another theme associated with full-time mothering. Mothers who are confined to the home, to the exclusive care of it and the children, can respond to that situation by "getting away." An alternative response to the same situation is what one informant calls "sneaking my own time." Given the constraints of full-time mothering, the mothers feel a loss of time to do something for themselves and to accomplish anything without interruption. They are full-time mothers, and they are in fact responsible for the constant care of their home and children; in consequence, they have no time for their own pursuits.

> The moment to myself is very, very rare and when I do have it, I take the phone off and close the door and just sit by myself. I miss reading. I miss doing things for myself. [I miss] getting up and going. The walking out of the door and saying we're going some place now. Sleeping whenever I want to sleep. Reading. I think it's my private time, going to the bathroom alone, these little luxuries.

Or, as another member put it:

> I want to eat supper, the kid needs a diaper changed, I am in desperate need of help and (my husband) says, 'I'm in the middle of doing something and I can't stop.' Well, I would dearly like to have that option, to be in the middle of something and not have to stop.

The burden of a rapidly moving two-year-old, who requires when loose around the house or yard the constant visual if not physical attention of some responsible and mobile adult results for these mothers in "never finishing a task." Their value system requires them to be responsible mothers twenty-four hours a day. Not surprisingly, as one informant put it, the middle class mother experiences a "loss of freedom."

Being a full-time mother is described in one Association brochure as being an "endurance test," and we have suggested some of the concerns which contribute to that state. Conflicts in the value system and conflicting expectations by the mother and significant others make it difficult for a middle class mother to do anything major (or structurally radical such as going back to work) to reduce the stress that she feels. Part of that conflict is feeling she ought to have time to pursue her own interests in addition to being a mother. As represented by the limited number interviewed for this study, these middle class mothers feel that it is right, and desirable, for them to have interests, tasks, pursuits outside of and/or in addition to being mothers. This of course conflicts with the value of full-time, exclusive mothering and as has been discussed, results in stress.

The concern for time of their own, what some participants call time to develop the "mother-person," to focus on "self-development," may be peculiar to the group of women in question. Not all mothers feel that they should or can pursue anything other than motherhood; it is not even a question for many mothers. Motherhood is something they have looked forward to, that they expect, that they find fulfilling. There is a sense that they feel that they have no right, and in some cases no desire, to do anything else, and as such, they accept it.

We can speculate that this difficulty in accepting full-time motherhood is related to the "achieved" versus "ascribed" status which may characterize these middle class mothers. As one participant put it:

> I think in the past women had children and they expected that they were "home free" and everybody sat around and had babies and that was fulfilling. I don't, for myself, think that that is the most fulfilling thing in my life. I view it as something that's going to take a period of time and I'm to get them to the point where they're a little more self-sufficient.

This mother, even though she has worked in the past at a professional career she enjoyed, and even though she feels that motherhood is unsatisfying, does not even consider the possibility of returning to the waged labor force where she will have a skilled professional job. It is, she feels, more important for her to be home. This mother deals with those feelings of frustration by relegating her experience as a mother to a "period of time," which will be over as soon as the children become more independent of her. While it can only remain speculative at this point, interviews in this study suggest that a major belief in the value system of middle class Anglo mothers is that motherhood is somehow temporary. The extremely positive value placed on "independence and self-sufficiency" for their children by these middle class Anglo mothers may be a part of a complex of childrearing beliefs. While mothers are supposed to be full-time, exclusive, and attentive, they do so in order to rear independent and self-sufficient children, who as they get older will both remove the burden of responsibility and at the same time put the mother out of a job.

One informant provides additional insight into the conflicts that these middle class mothers face. She says that many mothers feel that their lives are being "postponed" (instead of being lived or fulfilled), and that an important response to this is to turn childrearing into a job or career. And as with most careers, one is judged by the quality of the product or results. In the case of these middle class mothers that product is the "perfect child."

> Some people in the Association were brought up to think that home and family were their major goal in life. But I think there's a lot of other people who were also went to college and who have some other goals for themselves as people, and see the childrearing years as sort of holding them back a little bit. Maybe there's a conflict, an inner conflict not even on the conscious level that their life is being postponed while they're taking care of kids. Then you get this effect--your kids have to come out perfect because that's your full time job. When it doesn't work out that way, you get real frustrated.

D. Program Impact

Middle class women who attend Association meetings share a number of parental concerns. The mothers as a group tend to be well-educated, affluent, and almost without exception to have worked for wages in primarily professional occupations prior to the birth of their first child. We have argued that the cultural and economic climate of the middle class in the U.S. has contributed to creation of conflict or stress for mothers who were formerly working professionals: they are 'reclassified' as low status persons. A more detailed look at the social context of these mothers and at the parental values and concerns that they hold will clarify the interaction between the goals and philosophy of the organization and the impact that it has on its participants.

The state of isolation, as mothers have described it, represents an unsupportive social context. The second major area of concern, what we have called the mother-child "endurance test," contains conflicts within the belief system of the middle class. These two concerns combine to create a situation with little opportunity for reducing the stress. The cultural norms this group of women have accepted dictate that proper care of children in the Anglo middle class is possible only if mothers care for them full-time and in the home. Further, mothers are expected to be the exclusive care-givers. However, within the middle class, high status is accorded to those who earn money from their work, that is, to those who participate in the waged labor force. Going from paid professional careers to unwaged (low status) jobs as mothers creates a problem. The conflicting values, which are supported by the context in which the mother finds herself, result in problems which may be special to middle class Anglo women with professional backgrounds. This combination of an unsupportive social context and a conflicting value system creates what might loosely be called a double bind (Bateson, 1972), where the mother is trapped into maintaining the very situation which is creating her stress. This set of concerns constitutes the primary motivation for founding, building and keeping the organization.

The organization responds to the conflicting concerns of these middle class mothers by providing a "time out." The Association allows the participants to maintain their original "choice" of staying home by acting essentially as a pressure valve. It reinforces the very conditions which lead to stress, full-time motherhood in the isolated context of the nuclear family, but it makes the stress more bearable by providing occasional escape from the pressure and by creating a community of people who share the same experience. They are not career women, not "average housewives," but those who gave up membership in the (male) professional/business world to engage in full-time motherhood.

The experience of members differs somewhat from that of the leaders because many aspects of the organization are not experienced by them. These differential experiences affect leaders' and members' perceptions of themselves as participants, or at least the way they talk about themselves.

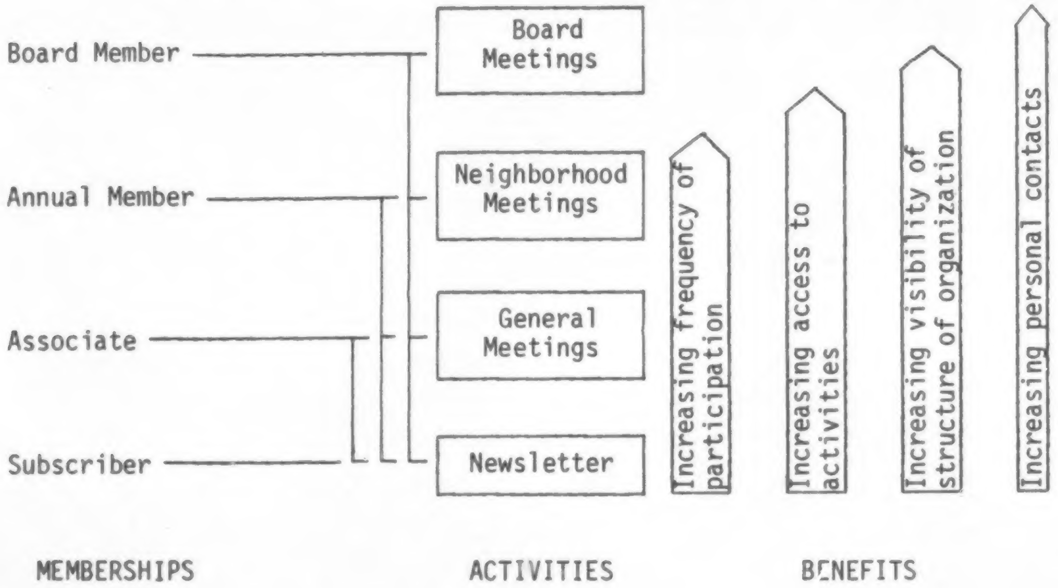
Both leaders and members report that meeting with people like themselves, who share their values, experiences and feelings was very important. Yet, in spite of their similar backgrounds, there are differences: leaders report that a valuable aspect of their participation is that they feel more self-confidence and have learned new skills and knowledge. Leaders have access to and participate in making the organization work. They learn organizational skills, not parenting skills. In addition, they are in regular and intimate contact with other board members who articulate the ideology of the organization, so they become socialized into talking about their experiences in similar ways. This increased contact, shared language, and new skills have resulted in the reported increased feeling of self-confidence.

Members, on the other hand, are not as well integrated into the organization and get to meet and know fewer people than board members and are not exposed to the ideology or operation of the organization. Still, they consider the experience of meeting new people to be the most important benefit of their participation.

The similarities in background, experience and impact stem from the class extraction of the group. Although it is a voluntary association, and one which does not recruit based on rigid entrance requirements, there is a great degree of homogeneity among the participants. Unlike many parent education programs, leaders and members share the same socioeconomic and educational background. Within the organization, this homogeneity results in a great deal of permeability between the different membership categories. One kind of member is not prevented from becoming a different type of member due to class, income, educational or ethnic differences. Instead, all it takes is increased time committed and/or slightly higher fees. This is also true to become a board member; all it takes is extra time and desire. In reality, it also requires that the individual contact or be contacted by the board, and as we have seen, greater adherence to the "style" of the mothers who already make up the organization.

The following chart shows the relationship between the different membership categories, access to activities, and the effects of this differential access.

CHART A
Membership, Access to Activities and Reported Impact


Board Member
Annual Member
Associate
Subscriber
Board Meetings
Neighborhood Meetings
General Meetings
Newsletter
Increasing frequency of participation
Increasing access to activities
Increasing visibility of structure of organization
Increasing personal contacts
MEMBERSHIPS
ACTIVITIES
BENEFITS

In summary, members and leaders are similar in terms of values, concerns, background, class and ethnicity. What the leaders get that members don't is access to and experience with the male professional model which characterizes the organization.

The group of women who attend Association meetings and become its leaders belong to that category of mothers who have been maligned in the literature and in the popular view for at least the last 100 years (Ehrenreich and English, 1979). They are the grasping mothers, the supermoms, the suffocating mothers, the cold mothers, as well as being the country club set, the Junior Leaguers, and the volunteers. Their working friends, neighbors, mothers, brothers, sisters and husbands think they do nothing all day long except watch the soaps and go shopping. They are women who are so fortunate and so affluent, who have it so easy, and who are also so lazy that the rest of society spends half the time calling it the American dream and the other half casting aspersions.

There is a measure of truth to the claim that the kinds of issues Association mothers are concerned with is thin icing on an otherwise ample cake. Other mothers are frequently concerned with more fundamental matters such as food, clothing, shelter, and safety, and often with the death of their traditions, visions, hopes and dreams. It is true that Association mothers do not generally have to concern themselves with the fundamentals of existence. But it is precisely because they're supposed to have it so easy, and despite that, their concerns as mothers are so great, that it behooves us to look at their pains.

Mothers in the Association, and many others like them, some working part-time, some at home, are caught in a vicious double bind. Because their husbands have taken care of other pressing material concerns, they have had the time to explore and articulate their condition. Besides being comfortable, wealthy and fortunate, they are also an intensely concerned group of women who want to do the best they can for their children, their families and themselves. Their fundamental difficulty, which they share with other mothers in this culture, lies in the fact that they live in a society which tells them on the one hand to make something of themselves and if they don't, it's their own fault; and which, on the other hand, ranks the job that they alone must do as almost completely worthless. They live in a society whose government ranks being a parent as lower than being a dog trainer, where being a foster parent ranks together with restroom attendant, or a child care attendant with parking lot attendant (Bernard, 1974). Trying to upgrade that pitifully low status is one of the few paths open to them.

The organizational structure and philosophy of the Association are a direct response to the powerful and painful double bind which women of this class experience when they become mothers. Through the use of specific boundary devices, a community was created where before there was no contact. By artful manipulation of the symbols and values of its class, the organization attracts members who share the same background and values. Through the use of organizational structures which the women as a group accept as having high status, the organization responds to the conflicts immanent within the beliefs and situation of middle class mothers by "professionalizing" motherhood.

We have argued that because the organization provides an avenue to let off steam, to reduce the stress of middle class motherhood (particularly for the mothers of demanding infants and toddlers), it reinforces the "choice" which creates their stress in the first place. From this standpoint, and taken on its own terms, the organization should be considered "successful." Of all those interviewed only one said that her participation made her realize that she wanted immediately to resume her professional career in addition to motherhood. For the remainder, the choice they made was reinforced by their participation.

How successful the organization is in larger terms is more difficult to assess. In most societies in the world, the domestic or private sphere is considered to be the province of women, including childrearing and homemaking, while the political or public sphere is considered to be the province of men (Lamphere, 1974). The Association has essentially tried to combine the two spheres in a very specific way. They have rejected the forced choice between two roles they feel are available to middle class Anglo women, careers or traditional motherhood, and tried to deal with the low status domestic sphere by turning it into a high status public one by giving motherhood attributes of the male professional world. The difficulty lies in the contradiction inherent in this approach, an approach which has always been available to middle class women: derivation of status from men and from the male sphere. This organization continues a male bias. While it tries to raise the status of domestic work by giving it male trappings, it reinforces the cultural ideal which relegates childrearing and socialization to the sole and exclusive province of women.

Even more than the other programs studied, the Association is an explicit example of "mother education." Policies and social priorities needed to move beyond the inherent limit of such an approach will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

E. The Association of Mothers as Cultural Reinforcement

In our original conceptualization of the process of Cultural Reinforcement, we had assumed that there were a number of traditional nuclear families who had found themselves suddenly in the minority, and who felt their lifestyle attacked by the media, women's liberation and the evidence around them of other families changing, breaking up, and experimenting with new forms of family life. In the face of society's apparent loss of faith in the myth of the nuclear family as not only the norm, but also the optimal arrangement for insuring the orderly socialization of children into society, we proposed that these families and other social institutions would try to reinforce the correctness of the traditional division of labor between husband and wife.

The problem is that the work of the wife, and in particular full-time motherhood, is a low status occupation. The solution to this problem lies in increasing the value accorded by society to motherhood as an occupation. This can be done by elevating this occupation to the category of a "profession."

The Association of Mothers is an example of such an attempt. It begins by setting up a category, "mothers," and endows them with positive attributes. Implied in the philosophy is that if nobody else recognizes the importance and worth of mothers, it is up to the mothers themselves to do so. A community is created of previously unrelated individuals who join in a mutual support system. They take occasional time out from full-time motherhood to discuss their situation, react to information from professional speakers, and reaffirm the symbols of motherhood. Many of the leaders, in addition, learn skills to build and run an organization and promote its message to the rest of the community.

We have seen this emergence of an organized community united around the symbol of motherhood as a process of cultural reinforcement both because individual women are reinforced in their choice to stay home with their children and because the family structure and cultural pattern of traditional motherhood is reinforced in media interviews, conferences, and other forms of public advocacy.

The Association reinforces a particular kind of woman, however. She is the highly educated woman who formerly held a high status job. In order to represent and appeal to this group of women, the Association has incorporated elements of both the male dominated public sphere and of the women's liberation movement, thus rejuvenating the myth of traditional motherhood with new ideological elements. This incorporation of new elements in order to reinforce the fundamental propositions of stay-at-home mothering differentiates the Association from other kinds of cultural reinforcement organizations, such as some which rely on religious sponsorship.

It should not prove surprising, however, if other cultural reinforcement organizations should evolve in similar ways. Cultural reinforcement should be understood as a dynamic process of change, not a static defense of rigid traditions. Even when traditional structures and cultural values of families are upheld, they are renewed in a contemporary context.

As this report was being written, we found some validation for this insight in regional forums sponsored by the White House Conference on the Family. Many of the people testifying before the commissioners represented various groups which we would classify as cultural reinforcement groups. Members of the Association of Mothers testified as well as numerous women associated with church-sponsored advocacy groups. While opinions on specific issues varied widely, all these groups utilized sophisticated organizing

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methods, and assumed that mothers should have more of a say on public priorities, even while affirming the place of women in the home.

What is central to the process of cultural reinforcement is that the childrearing values and practices of stay-at-home mothers are assumed to be sufficient and no changes are assumed necessary. What cultural reinforcement organizations _do_ want to change is the status of motherhood, renewing the recognized social value of motherhood in a society which has neglected the needs of mothers.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter highlights differences and similarities among the case studies that have been presented. These explicit comparisons are the result of a continuing comparative analysis of the programs. From the outset of our research, the comparative method guided us in selection of sites, it helped define the boundaries of each program, and it underlay the models through which we attempted to comprehend the major elements and relationships in each program. In the following pages, we will draw comparisons at several levels of contrast, in line with the major sections of each case study: organizational characteristics, ideologies, participants' characteristics, and impacts of programs.

Once drawn, these comparisons will enable us to answer some of the questions posed at the beginning of this investigation concerning the reasons for parent education and its limits. Finally, this chapter contains some general recommendations for policy and implementation of parent education.

Organizational Comparisons

Three different kinds of organizations are represented in the case studies. The Effective Parenting Course arises from a market place economy. Customers in need of information and support for their parental role meet with persons who offer access to such information and organize a group. Fees paid by the parents hire a skilled paraprofessional, who has this job only when enough customers are interested in attending the course. Each party comes to the exchange with some say over how the encounters will occur, though neither party can guarantee satisfaction. The course instructor cannot guarantee that the course will solve all problems that parents have; customers do not guarantee continued attendance if the course fails to meet their expectations.

The mutuality of this exchange means that a rough equality maintains between participants and instructor. At the same time, neither party comes to depend on the other. Courses like the Effective Parenting Course are time-limited. Strangers who meet over the course of six weeks may get to know something about each other, but they leave each other remaining strangers, each with their individual problems and each returning to their individual families. While the benefits of the experience may be significant, their social isolation is only temporarily suspended. The instructor assumes again a free-lance status, informally connected to a network of other parent educators, awaiting the next cycle of advertising and promotion to see if there are new parents willing to give time and money to take the course.

The Association of Mothers is entirely different from the Effective Parenting Course. The Association is organized by and for a membership, requiring a minimal expense and providing occasional free time away from children and home. Leaders and members differ not because they meet in opposite exchange roles, but because the former have spent more time involved in the organization. A "grass-roots" association rather than a market place encounter, the organization's reason for existence is to forge a community of like-minded individuals that will endure for as long as the members continue to support it. The membership categories of the Association are primarily definitions of the extent an individual will participate in the community of like-minded mothers. The board structure functions as a formal mechanism for decision-making and allocation of responsibility, though in practice individual leaders often by-pass the formal structure.

Finally, the Mother Child Development Program is a bureaucratic organization designed and implemented by professionals both to serve a selected clientele and to prove its own rationale for existing. With funds flowing from public and private grants, the organization is first accountable to these funding sources. It must implement a program according to a predetermined plan approved by the funding agencies. Staff working with parents are in turn accountable to the administrators of the program. Participating parents have little say over any significant aspect of the program.

Given that the program enters into rather than arises from an extant community of parents, the organization must utilize powerful recruitment mechanisms to induce participation. In addition, it must come through with a comprehensive service package, intensive interventions, and a continuity of operation in order to justify the large investment of the funding agencies. Although it is a secondary consideration as to whether these services and interventions meet with clients' own definitions of problems, the organization must insure parents are satisfied enough that they continue coming to the program. Parents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction, however, affect only indirectly the expansion or decline of the program. Organizational survival is strictly an outcome of decisions and priorities of the funding agencies and management of the program. More than either of the other two programs, this program is analogous to other corporate institutions of American society. Neither a voluntary association nor a free market exchange, this program operates through rational control of its employees and with the acquiescence of its clients.

Comparisons of Ideological Positions

By ideology, we mean the set of interrelated propositions represented in organizational goals, curriculum and intentions of program leaders, administrators and staff, which together form a coherent logic for the activities undertaken in a program. We can contrast program ideologies along several dimensions.

The goal of the Mother Child Development Program is primarily to enhance the development of children; the goal of the Association of Mothers is to enhance the self-concept of mothers; while the goal of the Effective Parenting Course is to enhance the quality of the parent-child relationship. Since these goals define the formal purpose for participation, and most participants are mothers of young children, each goal implies a different ideological position regarding the maternal role.

When the ideological emphasis is placed on the well-being of the child (MCDP), then mothers are seen as agents in an endeavor in which their individual needs are secondary. Implied in this position is not only that the mother is secondary to the child, but also that the child represents the future generation. Mothers are seen as having a responsibility to society. They are to guarantee the reproduction of appropriate behaviors in their children. The behaviors which are most important for this task are those that will lead to successful school performance. Mothers' work, then, is the preparation of children for their future social roles.

This position on maternal role contrasts strikingly with that of the Association. The Association takes for granted their members' responsibility for raising the middle class. Precisely because this responsibility is seen as both burdensome and not sufficiently recognized by society, the Association draws attention to the needs of individual mothers themselves. Women are brought out of the family and treated as individuals who are also mothers. The Association speaks to the concerns of individuals as they enact their maternal role; through this process, women come to recognize their common status as mothers.

Finally, the Effective Parenting Course does not emphasize either member in the mother-child dyad, but rather focuses on the reciprocal relationship between the two. The needs of children and the anxieties of parenthood are both discussed. Maternal role is seen neither as a responsibility to society nor an individual choice with potential negative consequences. It is seen as part individual experience-part cultural prescription, which emerges from an ongoing interaction with children.

Curriculum can be contrasted along the lines of authoritative information versus an eclectic mix of alternative points of view. The Association of Mothers clearly presents the most eclectic and open body of ideas, some generated by mothers themselves and others contributed by invited lecturers. The Effective Parenting Course offers information from a variety of child development experts, couched in terms of alternative strategies. The Mother Child Development Program offers the most definitive and authoritative advice on how to raise children. The curriculum for the preschool education of the children is as carefully planned and developed as the child development concepts imparted to the mothers. There is a scope and sequence of themes to be taught and, in each case, there are lesson plans and activities. The curriculum is already fixed in the original "model" and the MCDP is expected to implement the curriculum. Other activities are carried out in addition to the core curriculum in child development, such as workshops with parents.

These workshops permit greater flexibility and input from the participants, but the main activities designed to impact upon mothers and children are already fixed before they ever join the program.

Comparisons of Participants

Some of the distinctions in program organization and ideology can be clearly related to the respective socioeconomic classes to which the participants belong. Participants in the Association of Mothers belong to a privileged class of families. While their lives are by no means free of difficulties, they are highly educated and their economic well-being meets all their basic needs. In addition, most are able to purchase services and recreation to enrich their family life. They as individuals, rather than their families, are troubled. They have defined their problem as the low status accorded to the occupation of full-time mother and housewife. They feel isolated now that they have chosen to move from high status occupations to full-time motherhood. Because individual achievement is an important value to these middle class families, they define themselves as women needing greater individual fulfillment. At the same time, by definition such fulfillment through motherhood is reinforced by the Association. These women seek recognition not of how well they are raising their children (though they may pride themselves on being good mothers) but rather on the fact that they are doing it with some personal sacrifice.

In line with their class power, the Association of Mothers creates an organization determined by members alone, securing for free the services of community resources and professionals, marshalling "grass-roots" middle class power to defend and rejuvenate the role of mother. In so doing, they construct an association of mothers to promote their interests.

The Effective Parenting Course attracts participants who have fewer resources to draw upon. The economic conditions of these families are those of middle class scarcity. Most basic needs are met, but there is little disposable income to buy services or recreation that would promote better or happier family life. Some of the families have nuclear structures in which only husbands work, while others are dual-working parent families or single parents. Women in these families feel just as isolated as Association women, but they have additional problems of economic scarcity, lack of husband support, negative childhood experiences with their own family, and current difficulties with growing children. That they are drawn to a course focusing more on the parent-child relationship than on themselves as individual women reflects a concern to improve family life or to improve their relationship with their children. These mothers are not motivated by advocacy like the Association of Mothers. Their main problem is being able to do the job of disciplinarian and socializer in a way that does not include constant confrontation and tension along with hollering and spanking. They do not question the maternal role, just their lack of preparation to deal with the work involved. They enter the market place, seeking specific skills and techniques for which they are willing to pay. Fathers can also more freely enter this arena.

While the course requires personal initiative, self-selection, and self-motivation, it does not entail either the benefits or risks of commitment to a community of people. Entering and leaving the course as relative strangers, participants find in the course a temporary way out of isolation. The main benefit, however, is that they add to their repertoire of available parenting skills either to help them through the changing circumstances of their family lives or to accomplish change that they have actively initiated.

Minority, low-income mothers who participate in the Mother Child Development Program, while by no means a homogeneous group, have one central condition in common: they all face the institutions and cultural norms of a dominant society with little power to alter those fundamental conditions which shape their expectations as individuals and as mothers. Much of their lives are organized around using, adapting to, or protecting themselves from agencies and cultural information over which they have little control. It comes as no surprise that the form of parent education available to them is an intensive program of intervention which defines their parental role as deficient.

A grass-roots movement of Mexican-American mothers defining their own problems and solutions would no doubt look quite different than the program they find themselves in. Yet, such a hypothetical program would also look very different from the association that middle class women organize for their interests. The Mexican-American culture gives much greater support to the status of motherhood than the middle class Anglo culture. From the perspective of these mothers, the fact that they are mothers is not the problem. Rather, it is the other aspects of life regarding the minority culture and their lower class status that constitutes the problem they face as mothers. The continuities and discontinuities of Mexican-American culture which mothers transmit to their children are problematic; the maintenance of Mexican-American families across three generations is problematic; and the strategies of cultural conservatism and cultural adaptation to survive a disadvantaged class position are problematic. While the women interviewed would not have articulated their problems in the foregoing manner, both the benefits and risks of their participation in the Mother Child Development Center can be better understood in terms of these dilemmas.

Focusing on children and on mothers' role in their education seems to be not simply an artifact of the program in which these women are enrolled, but a primary concern in these mothers' lives. All the mothers spoke at length about the better life that they wanted for their children. Contrary to the women in the Association who concentrated on their own lives as individuals and the parents in the Effective Parenting Course who focused on the parent-child relationship, mothers in the MCDP put their children first. Changing their lives as individuals to better equip themselves for survival in the dominant society was a secondary consideration. The MCDP responds to this primary concern of mothers for the new generation of Mexican-American children, even while manipulating it in the direction of society's dominant values.

The contrasts in the participants and the parent education programs can be understood by looking at the different social classes, ideologies, and power that characterize these mothers. We have sought to illustrate these contrasts in the foregoing brief analysis. Yet, to end this comparison of parents, mostly women, with only a class analysis would be inadequate. All the women interviewed, regardless of class, shared some fundamental similarities as mothers with young children.

The mothers enrolled in parent education programs find themselves excluded from other productive roles in society. For many middle class mothers, this exclusion is felt as a form of social isolation in the privacy of their middle class homes. Minority mothers may find more social support from informal networks of kin (though this is not always the case), but in addition they are also excluded from well paid or meaningful work.

Most of the mothers subscribe to the value of full-time, exclusive child care. Excluded from other definitions of social worth, these women found personal meaning in their own exclusive and unique social responsibility of raising children. Regardless of the content or form of education encountered in the programs, the women found mutual recognition and shared the experiences of motherhood with other women like themselves. For many women, this sharing was the most significant outcome of their participation in programs.

Program Impact

The Effective Parenting Course and the Mother Child Development Program are both organized and designed to change the parental behavior of the individual participants. Both the EPC and MCDP mothers mentioned specific concepts and skills that they had acquired as a result of their participation.

The Mother Child Development Program covered more material over a considerably greater period of time than the EPC. Its impact was a complex series of changes affecting different participants in different ways. Some of these changes resulted in participants reorienting their cultural values, triggering dissonance with more traditional values. The short term of the Effective Parenting Course, six weeks, did not prevent participants from actually applying specific suggestions to their own behavior with their children. In both programs participants reported success with particular techniques that they had discussed in the program. In the Effective Parenting Course mothers additionally found that they were not alone, that their problems were often shared by other people like them. They found comfort and reassurance that certain problem behaviors were just a "stage" that their child probably would outgrow soon. The proof was there, since other mothers like themselves and a semi-authoritative leader were saying that things can and will get better.

Changes in various aspects of the maternal role among participants in the EPC and the MCEP contrast sharply with the absence of such discrete changes among members of the Association of Mothers. The degree of involvement of women in the Association ranged from only reading the Newsletter, to attending meetings, to participating on the Board which made the decisions about monthly speakers and other activities. The Association of Mothers influenced many women through limited and somewhat impersonal social encounters in the monthly meetings. In addition, women attending the monthly meetings felt challenged by speakers and intellectually stimulated. As such, the meetings were not only a time out from routine, demanding work, but exactly the opposite--a time to think, be stimulated, feel important and worthwhile. Much of the impact of the Association operated at a symbolic level--specific topics were less important than the opportunity to share in professional opinions on homemaking, motherhood, and family life.

So far our discussion has been restricted to the impact of programs on the individuals who participated. But each of these programs are social entities more or less connected to the communities in which they operate. Is there an impact of the programs on their communities?

We chose to study the Effective Parenting Course as a unit through which parent education is delivered. In reality, the particular course we studied is just one of similar groups that came before and that will continue being formed in the future. We have suggested that these types of parent education programs obey the law of supply and demand. EPC is but one expression of the River City Parent Child Association and only one of over 400 different courses for adults offered through the Community Education System in River City. The River City Parent Child Association is interested in other aspects affecting the family; their main activity is conducting Lamaze training and prenatal education, but they also sponsor Cesarean Section Support Groups, Toilet Training courses, and exert a general, progressive influence over mother and child health issues in the city. They have been in the forefront of support for the local hospital's extremely progressive Birthing Center, a "home-like" setting where birth is devoid of the usual traumatic images of hospital. Thus, the RCPCA is an expression of an important special interest segment of the community, and it has formal and informal links with a variety of other groups, organizations and institutions.

The Association of Mothers is a much smaller and newer organization, but in its short life it has sought aggressively to link up to other groups and institutions in the city. The organization started by creating its own "community," the members who made up the organization. After that, it set out to locate resources in the community that could be used to further their goals of providing their members with stimulation and challenging monthly meetings. Because of the upper middle class extraction of the members, and especially through the contacts of husbands and former co-workers, the Association has been able to tap and use resources from the State University, the city, and even got support from a foundation to stage a "Mother's Conference." The organization became a member of the city-wide Parent Education Association, but it carefully seeks co-sponsor status for special programs in which they have been instrumental.

These complex interrelationships between the two programs, the Association and the Effective Parenting Course, and the community where they operate contrast sharply with the Mother Child Development Program. This program operates almost totally in isolation from any other community organization. It gained a measure of legitimacy at the outset by being under the umbrella of the Loveman Community Center, a multipurpose social and health services agency funded by grants and contacts with various city and county agencies. The influence that the Loveman Community Center exerts over the MCDP is very limited. It enters into the MCDP operation in two minor and unrelated ways. First, siblings of program children are cared for across the street at the Loveman Center, and control group families receive in exchange for their participation medical and some social services from the Loveman Center.

The lack of contacts with any local grass-roots organizations does not mean that the MCDP operates with a degree of autonomy. On the contrary, everything about the program is determined by other outside groups or programs: the original concept for the program, referred to as the "model," originated in another city in Texas; the funds to attempt the replication came from a midwestern foundation; the contract to manage and evaluate the replication experiment came from an agency of the Department of HEW; the contractors chosen were employees of a northeastern university.

When original funding commitments were withdrawn, the MCDP staff found itself trying to secure funds to operate from city, county, and state agencies and other local foundations. The MCDP developed as a result of forces totally outside the community in which it operates and, until the time of this study, it has been unable to generate sources of support from the community it serves. An example of its detachment was its failure to participate in a community fight joined by some of its clients to save an area hospital from being closed.

In summary, both the Association of Mothers and the Effective Parenting Course depend for their existence on members or participants who are ready, willing and able to enter into a relationship, whether through membership and support or through a contract for educational services over a period of time. The Mother Child Development Center, on the other hand, is determined outside of the community it purports to serve, and thus will exist in its present form as long as there are outside interests willing to continue funding a ten year long experiment. When there was a breakdown in the funding, and the MCDP had to scramble on its own for funds, important eligibility restrictions were modified from the original tight "experimental design." Accountability to state and local social service agencies are likely to force the program to drop many restrictions imposed by the research needs. As a matter of fact, the staff of the MCDP did not seem all that committed to the research needs, which they saw as complications. They were, however, committed to the model of change for the mother role embodied by the program.

We can only venture to guess what shape the program would take if the present staff stays, but recruiting is more open and participants and other organizations in the barrio gain a voice in the decisions about services to be offered. From the interviews, we know that many participating women wanted more activities and education directed to their needs as women, in addition to the services for the children and education for child development.

Parent Education and Parental Needs

The preceding comparative analysis of parent education programs has delineated organizational structures and ideological positions adopted by programs that serve selected groups of parents. We have also described

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parents' own definitions of need and how these needs articulate with the parent education program in which they are involved. This articulation helps account for the nature and degree of program impact, as reported by the participants. The models of cultural change abstracted from the case studies suggest directions of family change which programs respond to and help catalyze.

At this point, we have come full circle and need to address some of the broad questions posed at the outset of our inquiry. We assumed, initially, that many families were under stress and that this stress could be seen in certain broad historical terms. The development of capitalist society has made increasing demands on family members which at the same time has caused the family unit to lose much of its autonomy. Parent education was assumed to be one of a number of social responses to this development that mediated the relationship between families and the larger society. Several questions followed from these assumptions: (1) In what ways do parent education programs mediate family life and society, both as educational structures and as social organizations? (2) What combination of factors accounts for the continued interest in parent education? (3) What are the limits of parent education? (4) Should communities and policy-makers promote parent education? And if so, (5) what direction should parent education take and what do these future directions imply for practitioners and researchers in the field?

It is often stated that being a parent is virtually the only job in contemporary society for which there is no formal training. This statement is often used to justify parent education. In a society in which most goods and services are produced in specialized branches of work, supervised by trained specialists, the haphazard allocation of responsibility for childrearing to parents strikes many social observers as the height of irrationality. They point out as evidence the plight of first-time parents who have to struggle with the rigors of "on-the-job" learning; they deplore the lack of social accountability for parents who fail; they blame parents for their children's school failure, personal maladjustment, and thwarted potential. Based on this analysis of parental shortcomings as rationale, parent education should be society's way of controlling the work of parents, establishing behavioral guidelines, training parents in necessary skills, imparting necessary information, and periodically evaluating whether parents are performing well.

In short, parent education would be patterned to follow the same lines of social control that schooling represents for children. This relationship between parents and society established through parent education is most clearly seen in what we have called the cultural reorientation model. It is not, however, exclusively found in programs for minority, low-income parents. One of the central metaphors of the Association of Mothers is the "professionalization of motherhood." This metaphor hints at a notion of formal recognition for already competent parents.

Insofar as parent education is seen primarily as society's way of schooling parents, then its mediation is unidirectional, ranging from a subtle to a very obvious enforcement of social norms and institutional control. Critics of American schools have already identified this process of institutional control acting on school-age children. Parent education as schooling represents the expansion of educational control over a new group of people. Yet, the differences between schooling of children and education of parents are significant. Most importantly, no statute has ever been seriously considered that would make parent education compulsory and universal. The closest approximation of such a statute are the attempts to establish a more universal education for parenthood while young people are still under the control of the schools.

Education for Parenthood is different from parent education, however, in that it represents a form of anticipatory socialization for people expected to become parents in the future. Education for Parenthood represents a further refinement of the traditional Family Life Education curriculum, and its greatest innovation consists of attempting to attract males into courses traditionally considered the province of female students, the future mothers.

Those who advocate parent certification fly in the face of a basic tenet in American society guaranteeing the rights of individuals to determine their own lives. Attempts by the government to restrict the right of individuals to be parents have encountered strong resistance. In areas of government intervention in family life such as forced sterilization by public agencies or state custody of children, abridgement of individual rights has been denounced and measures to protect the rights of parents have met with widespread support. Any form of parent education which functioned only as a means of social control would also conflict with individual freedom guaranteed in principle to the American people.

Given the relatively limited resources currently allocated by the state to programs of this type, we should not fear so much their development as a form of coercive control, but rather we should question them as subtle manipulations of relatively powerless segments of the society. As we have suggested in our account of a cultural reorientation program, these fears may be warranted. If parent education continues to be defined as a unidirectional mediation through which society imposes its own goals on parents, then parents may be better off left to their own devices, protecting whatever autonomy remains to them. It could be argued that no parents were forced to participate, and that they did so out of their own volition. This is true, except that the choice given to them was to take the program as offered or simply not to participate. This is an unfair allocation of social resources that are the product of the labor of all people, although they may now come back as federal funds or be channeled through a foundation that "gives" something that belongs to the people in the first place.

Other alternative interpretations of parent education can also be argued. One of these interpretations sees education as a means by which individuals take the initiative, seeking the experience of others, acquiring information that can help them better choose how to act, selecting from a body of cultural wisdom their own way of thinking, reflecting upon their own actions and enhancing their lives. In all the programs studied, many parents brought this ideal of education to the program. Cultural Elaboration Programs most clearly represent this kind of mediation between society and parents. Individual self-help _is_ the prerequisite for parents who seek the course to begin with. But even the Cultural Reorientation Program studied was flexible enough so that participants could select information and values which they thought could enhance their family life, and in the process of getting more education, many grew in self-confidence.

In the absence of other means of acquiring information and values of parenthood (such as through informal networks of kin and friends), this kind of education, parent-initiated and maintained, is a valid means for supporting the development of families in contemporary society. Yet, only some families need this education and these families should not expect these programs to be a panacea. The greatest danger in promoting the massive spread of these kinds of self-help programs is that education could be seen as a total solution to problems that probably have their roots elsewhere. Education as a cure-all is a cherished American myth that has fallen short under close scrutiny and found incapable of breaking social inequities. The most important contribution of education is that at its best it is a mediation between individuals and their cultural tradition that flows in both directions. Individuals make sense of and contribute to a culture that they are a part of and that they continue to create.

A third interpretation of parent education stretches the usual sense of the term education towards a phenomenon which emerged in the sixties known as consciousness-raising. In this mode of education, individuals in a similar set of social circumstances get together in groups to analyze their situation and defend their self-interests. Consciousness-raising was a key method of organizing and developing the women's movement, whose initial content included a radical break with traditional women's roles. The connection of this mode of education with a radical content in the 1960s makes it look somewhat incongruous when found in an association of mothers, reinforcing rather than rejecting traditional stay-at-home mothering, and rejecting rather than embracing "liberation politics." Yet, despite the different content, this mode of education mediates family life and society by asserting the collective will of these individuals to define their own terms of social existence in the face of what they see as an indifferent or hostile society. They take "parent education" into their own hands, using it to develop an organization and community of like-minded parents.

Consciousness-raising and parent advocacy are appealing mediations empowering parents to determine their own lives, and appearing to redress the imbalance between families and powerful social pressures. Should this kind of education, however, be utilized by only one class of families, those with traditional structures and already dominant cultural values, the result may lead to a cultural hegemony suppressing the needs and aspirations of other diverse family units holding distinct cultural values. The seeds of this type of movement can already be seen in the numerous "pro-family" crusades that are being promoted by conservative fundamentalist Christian churches. Their definition of "the family" excludes other forms which together have come to be a majority of American families. One would hope, rather, for pluralistic cultural reinforcement movements advocating the interests of a variety of families in distinct cultures and classes in American society.

The discussion, so far, has moved through three interpretations of parent education as educational mediations between individual families and society. For the individuals involved, however, these programs are more than educational. Over and above whatever different kinds of learning took place in the programs that we studied, parents and staff, members and leaders were conscious of the social dimension to their experience. Some spoke simply of the opportunity that programs provided them to "socialize" with others. Others were aware that programs provided an opportunity to break out of isolation they felt as mothers of young children. By learning a shared language and set of values, parents got more than education. They participated in a socialization process, which, whatever its limitations or benefits, provided moments of commonality and confirmation of each others' lives.

Conceivably, any number of experiences could provide this sense of common social meaning and collective endeavor. But the transformation of the privacy of family life into an experience shared by members of different families seems one of the most significant elements of parent education.

While the term "socialization" is most commonly understood by social scientists to mean the process whereby individuals learn the ways of society, the Marxist tradition of scientific inquiry, in particular, has used "socialization" as a term referring to the phenomena of greater numbers of people joining together in a common endeavor. As an example of this line of thinking, the industrial revolution "socialized" the means of production by bringing together unprecedented numbers of workers in factories to increase the efficiency and output of social labor. In recent discourse, contemporary scholars (Cleaver, 1979; Dalla Costa, 1972; see also Ehrenreich and English, 1979; Lasch, 1978; Bronfenbrenner, 1970) have pointed to the increasing "socialization of reproduction." The raising of children and their development into socially productive individuals has become in the course of the twentieth century an increasing preoccupation of professionals, government officials, corporate leaders, and the general public. Just as the conditions under which the production of goods were socialized led to horrendous abuses and inequalities, the prospects for greater socialized reproduction are not all bright. Many parents are weary of programs, policies and cultural movements which restrict their autonomy. At the same time, greater socialization of reproduction might relieve overworked mothers from the burdens of the isolated, unpaid work of raising children alone. If parent education programs emerge from the needs of parents rather than as further extensions of social control, they may lead to new social arrangements in which families more readily share child care responsibilities, without losing greater autonomy.

This vision, however, must come to grips with the apparent limits of parent education as it has developed historically and as it currently manifests itself. Parent education has rarely lived up to its name. For virtually all of its history to the present, it has succeeded mostly in being "mother" education. Inadvertently or with intention, mother education has helped to maintain the traditional family roles of women, adding to their responsibilities by increasing the amount of knowledge and skills needed, and enlarging the roles that mothers are expected to play. The focus of many current programs on disciplinary methods is just one example of how parent education directed only to mothers adds a responsibility to their role that in traditional, more patriarchal family structures was reserved for fathers. As long as parent education is mother's education, it will continue to miss touching what appears to be a central dilemma of American families, the role of the father in child care and socialization.

This dilemma was either implied or made explicit in the families that we studied. When fathers were present but not actively involved, it resulted in stress and overload for the mothers. When the father was absent, as with single mothers and those whose husbands worked in distant places, the full burden of parenthood fell on the shoulders of the mother.

The dilemma facing women is the virtual impossibility of raising children alone in their homes without experiencing stress and/or isolation. With the exception of single parent families, in all cases the level of participation of fathers in child care and socialization made the difference between a viable family life and one that was being stretched to its limits. To the extent that fathers took an active role in the care of children, the level of stress and tension was lessened. In the Effective Parenting Course the two families who had reached the point of a viable arrangement for discharging parental responsibilities seemed the best adjusted, and their participation was not so much remedial as it was a search for enrichment of a situation that is already acceptable. The most desperate cases of stress were found among women who had husbands who did not participate in the domestic life. Married mothers resented the passivity of their husbands and their lack of empathy and understanding. Single parents are in one way better off, because they know that they are the only resource available, and that relief has to come from support systems outside of the family unit.

The central question becomes what does it take to get fathers to assume a greater role in child care and socialization? Men traditionally have not been trained to take care of small children, feed them, or change diapers. Their socialization does not include spending time paying attention to a toddler that cannot communicate with words but yet demands constant attention. Most fathers are happy to teach manly things like pitching a ball, setting up a fishing rod, swimming and other sports to eager pupils. But the period of greatest stress and pressures are the preschool years, and those are the years that are skipped in the anticipatory socialization of fathers.

One partial solution, the education for parenthood movement, makes sense. It involves exposing both young men and women to child care and parenting in classes and experiences in high schools and other social settings where young people participate. A vital component is direct experience with young children in day care centers and preschools. The barriers that education for parenthood face are the reluctance of schools and teachers to innovations and cultural norms that continue segregating interests and courses by gender. Male participation in education for parenthood activities, while encouraging, still reaches a small minority of future fathers.

In the meantime, the greatest force for change in males' family roles comes from the increasing participation of women in the labor force. While many people claim that a job only adds to the burdens of women, profound changes may take place in the allocation of tasks necessary for a viable family life when both father and mother work. Alternative child care arrangements have to be made, and often the father becomes involved in the mechanics of securing child care or in the actual care for periods of non-overlap in work schedules. In a sense, the most dramatic changes in the domestic arena of the home are taking place in the role of the father.

From the perspective of the mother, on the other hand, the most important change is her incorporation to a different world, the workplace, where she will be judged and rewarded in ways that are likely to be radically different from the domestic world of the home. She will be in contact with other adults, supervised or supervising them in ways that differ from her maternal experience. The products of her work are likely to be more tangible than those of child care, and she definitely will be rewarded for her efforts with a wage that will be indexed to the length of time she works, the output and/or quality of her products or services. The implications for her personal and social life are many: how will this new set of experiences repeated daily affect her continuing maternal behavior? How will they affect her self-concept as a woman? How will it affect her self-perception in her roles as a woman, mother and wife? How will her husband relate to these new circumstances? What are the characteristics of the negotiations that take place to redefine roles and relationships?

Mothers working for pay constitute the single most important source of pressure for a redefinition of parental roles. We have seen how so far parent education programs for the most part have played a conservative role reinforcing the cultural norms of division of labor and roles by gender.

While participating in parent education programs which reinforce the isolation and stress of full-time motherhood may not be the answer in the long run, women's full-time participation in the paid work force runs its own risks. Women have for too long suffered from the burden of double careers. In order to reduce the stress experienced by mothers, in order to alleviate their concerns, men will have to participate more in children's socialization. If they wish to have happy families and children, men will have to be equal partners in parenthood, and the structure of the workplace will have to be altered to accommodate a viable sharing family. Social priorities must be changed to reflect the importance of childrearing and socialization, and policy in both the social and economic spheres needs to promote that change.

Recommendations for Policy and Research

After studying three rather different parent education programs, we have ventured some generalizations about what the people and organizations represent. They are examples of programs and concerns that exist in other places around the country. On the basis of what has been learned from these specific programs, we will offer some general recommendations for public policy. Policy questions often refer to actions and omissions by people and agencies in a position to allocate social resources that are as a rule scarce. Thus, policymakers have to guide themselves with criteria such as greatest need and cost-effectiveness, and with ethical and moral questions about the propriety of public intervention in areas that may be considered private. Such is the case of parent education and family issues.

1. Public resources under the control of specialized agencies of the federal government have been used to promote parent education. The most visible and ambitious programs come under the category of "research and development" or "demonstration" projects. Such is the case of the cultural reorientation program studied. Over ten years of time, talent and money have been invested to prove that it is possible to take parents, any parents, and train them to teach their children better. We are still waiting for definitive confirmation that the "program model" works, and that when the children who have participated go to school, they succeed at a greater rate (or fail at a lower rate) than the control children who were deprived of the opportunity to be so educated. Furthermore, in the logic of the bureaucracy, [illegible] is necessary to prove that the "program model" can be "replicated," [illegible] that the children processed by the "replication program" also succeed [illegible] higher rate than the controls.

Assuming that the proof is convincing, the chances of a similar program being funded and expanded to additional locations seems remote. The program model is far too complicated and overdetermined to fit into any community and not be an imposition. It also runs the risk of being unresponsive to the local needs and concerns, because it lacks a built-in mechanism for local control and/or input from its client population.

The School Community Liaison Program, succinctly reported in Appendix I, represents the other extreme of public (often federal) contribution to parent education. A variety of activities undertaken by school districts in categorical programs such as Bilingual Education and Title I, often include a component that is "parent education." Here, the problem is not overdetermination of the curriculum, goals, and mode of delivery. On the contrary, what these programs suffer from is insufficient direction and unclear goals: parents are seldom consulted about their needs and preferences. Because the delivery agency is the school, these activities tend to reflect school concerns and be used to legitimize the influence of the school over linguistic minorities and/or low income parents. The front line personnel are sensitive to the needs and styles of the parents, often being recruited from their ranks. They are, however, poorly trained for their role as parent educators, given insufficient time to carry out their work, and often used as supplementary clerical help by the schools. There is considerable variation between schools, and the influence of each principal and the teachers can easily override any central coordination or other attempts to improve the quality of the education offered to parents.

As it can be seen from the two programs studied that are in part federally funded, both suffer from basic design flaws. One is overdetermined and costly, requiring from participants a long term commitment of time and energy. The other lacks clear goals, a well defined target population and trained personnel. In both cases the amount of input that parents have on the actual activities is minor.

As a matter of policy, it seems clear that there is a greater potential for reaching larger numbers of parents through school-based programs than could be reached through replications of the Mother Child Development Program. A greater and more clear commitment to parent education as a vital part of parental involvement in schools should be the norm. There are already good models available. The work of the late Ira Gordon and his colleagues in developing the Follow Through Parent Education Model is a source of curricular materials and experience that could be used to train school personnel. The key is the involvement of parents in all facets of the program, from selection of curricular materials to the times and places where parent education activities take place.

We can summarize our recommendations for federal government involvement by saying that the key is diversity and flexibility in content and delivery modes to suit the needs and styles of the individual schools and communities. The primary contribution of federal programs should be the commitment of resources in the form of materials, training and technical assistance. The burden for a viable program, however, remains with the community, its organizations, school district and individual schools.

2. Cultural reinforcement movements, led by parents, have great potential for redressing some of the social and cultural pressures facing American families. While being sensitive to these movements, policy-makers need to seek out a wide variety of advocates for differing family structures, ethnic groups and classes. Public forums and conferences may provide a needed airing of divergent points of view on the family.

The promise and also the dangers of such forums are well illustrated by the case of the Texas White House Conference on Families. Five regional forums were held, and testimony was taken from individuals and organizations. Representatives from the Association of Mothers, as well as numerous religious-based organizations promoting cultural reinforcement of the traditional family participated in great numbers. The points of view of other kinds of families were not equally represented, however. The conference did not draw input from families where both parents worked or from single parent families, nor were ethnic minority or low-income families sufficiently represented (see

Sutherland and Meditch, 1980). The places, times, and days of the week may account for the skewed representation; or, one may surmise that only a privileged minority of middle class families have the time and resources to participate in such public forums. Regardless, the danger of cultural reinforcement movements is that the culture of only one segment of American families may be reinforced at the expense of other diverse segments.

Policy makers need to exercise caution and seek out a variety of views.

Research is needed to document emerging views, determine their origins and implications for social life, and identify community responses. Institutions, including schools, churches, unions, and government agencies, need to be open to the changing needs and the diversity of family forms.

3. If parent education is going to be responsive to local needs, its best chance is with cultural elaboration programs. Because of their local character and market sensitivity, they are more likely to appear when and where they are needed. In addition, the curriculum is flexible and eclectic; thus, it can accommodate the variety of family forms and racial and ethnic groups that constitute present day American families. If there is going to be a public policy to support parent education, it can be best implemented at the local level. Support for these types of programs has the potential for helping less affluent groups to buy these services by facilitating babysitting, providing space for the groups to meet and subsidizing the fees paid by participants. Community education systems are an ideal delivery system for these types of courses. They are community controlled, located in the various neighborhoods that make up each city, and are more sensitive to the ethnic and cultural characteristics of its clients.

Local control over the content and delivery mode of parent education information, services, counseling, etc. is the only way to insure responsiveness to the needs and styles of the families that want or need these services. Neighborhood Centers provide accessible and familiar surroundings where mutual sharing can take place.

4. One of the most serious shortcomings of the cultural elaboration program we studied, and which seems to be a general characteristic of these types of programs, is their lack of continuity over time. In addition to the information, concepts and skills, participants value finding a community, although short-lived, of equally concerned parents who provide a source of comparison and social and emotional support. The continuation of that function, through periodic meetings without a set curriculum, could have the potential for breaking the state of isolation in which most of these parents are raising their children today. The requirements for support groups of this nature are simpler than for a regular parent education course; just a place where parents can interact, ideally with recreational facilities, so that children can be incorporated, and functioning during the day and evenings. Neighborhood Community Centers hold a great potential as the setting for these groups. In addition, the long neglected idea of child care facilities located right in the workplace, such as factories and offices and other places that employ parents, could serve as the focal point for parents to come together and share concerns and solutions.

It is possible to transform childrearing, now for many an essentially lonely and painful task, into an enriching social endeavor without giving up personal values or the possibility of still keeping a private family life. For some, churches provide such a setting. For many others, public places, such as Neighborhood Centers, can be the place to come and relax in a safe environment, without any demands. Mothers, whether they work for wages or not, and fathers can come together and share experiences, provide mutual support and serve as peer models.

5. Child care is the first hurdle that working parents must clear. It is also a concern of stay-home mothers, although it was often voiced as a negative reference to support their stay-home status. Parents need the peace of mind of knowing that their children are well cared for, fed and stimulated. Given a choice, many parents would rather have a trusted relative to care for the children in their own home. That is not possible for a large number of families, and the variety of arrangements that are currently used attest to the centrality of this need. Although child care as an issue was beyond the limits of this study and was not explored systematically, it is clearly of great concern to working mothers and single parents who have to depend on it every day. Public policy needs to address child care as a necessary service, and to set standards of quality as well as incentives for factories and business to provide affordable quality care in a convenient location.

6. We have already mentioned that the term parent education usually means mother education. By not recognizing this limitation, parent education programs have played a conservative role in society by upholding the old domestic ideal and not recognizing the changes that are taking place in the American family. However, the role of the father is not going to be changed by decree; it will change through readjustments and accommodations that are already taking place in working mother families.

Parent education programs should open up to attract the full participation of fathers. As the shift from mother education to parent education is made, new contents will have to be considered as a part of the curriculum of these programs. These include a reexamination of the definitions of the father role, the study of strategies for negotiation of parental responsibilities and tasks, new forms of family life and relationships, a different domestic economy in the light of new role definitions, better use of resources available in the community for family recreation and enrichment, and an advocate role for parents and families to demand the quality and level of services they need from the community and workplace.

Contemporary American families are responding to economic needs and to their own expectations for a better standard of living through the incorporation of mothers to the work force. The challenge is to accomplish this without just adding one more layer of responsibility on the shoulders of already overworked mothers. The challenge to accomplish this and have a viable and satisfying family life rests with the fathers as much as it does with the mothers. Parent education has the potential to help meet these social needs.

APPENDIX I: THE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LIAISON PROGRAM

A. The Program

The River City School System employs a community liaison specialist and eight paraprofessional "community representatives" as part of its bilingual program in nine elementary schools receiving Title VII funds. The schools offering the program are located in several parts of the city, all with substantial percentages of Mexican American children enrolled. The communities served by these schools differ in significant ways, however. Three schools are located in the heart of the city's barrio, serving a well-established but primarily poor Mexican American community. Another school serves an isolated section of town, also primarily Mexican American, at the outskirts of the city. A fifth school borders on the Black community, and Blacks outnumber Mexican American children. Two other schools are tri-ethnic, with the largest percentage of children Anglo, serving a mix of low and middle income families. The last school in the program is a sixth grade center established for desegregation purposes and receiving children bused in from other areas of town, in addition to serving its own immediate tri-ethnic neighborhood. A community representative of the liaison program is assigned to each of these schools, with the exception of the sixth grade center, which shares its representative with one of the other elementary schools.

The School-Community Liaison Program is embedded within and accountable to various administrative units of the school system, including the school board, the central administration and its office of research and evaluation, the bilingual program administration, and the offices of each separate school.

In addition, staff of the program work with teachers and counselors in the schools.

These various formal links situate the program in a complex web of diffuse and sometimes conflicting demands on staff time and program direction. A component of other programs, the School-Community Liaison Program also has its own "components." It organizes the Parent Advisory Councils for the bilingual program in each school; it implements "home-based curriculum" with parents of randomly selected children from each school; it conducts workshops in parent education for parents of school children; it provides a lending library of toys and educational materials to parents; it sponsors field trips for parents; and in past years, it has coordinated parent volunteers in the classroom, although this last activity was dropped from the program's formal objectives with the new school year.

The bulk of the field work in this program consisted of attending three Parent Workshops, conducted by different Community Representatives, and interviewing twelve parents and six staff. The workshops were designed to last four sessions of one hour and a half each, and were conducted in the schools during the morning hours. It was clear that the participants did not feel compelled to attend all four sessions. In consequence, some who came to the first session did not return, and some came as late as the third or fourth session.

The structure of the workshops was determined by materials developed at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. These materials, described as multimedia training packages for parents, make use of a variety of audiovisual media to present concepts and encourage participation from up to fifteen participants.

The packages used were Family Roles and Relationships in two workshops, and La Familia y el Respeto in the third.

Family Roles and Relationships (materials in English only)

This package deals with ways family living contributes to the normal and healthy development of roles, relationships, and sexuality in children from 0-6 years of age, through the role-modeling, acceptance, and open dialogue. These materials are designed to offer information on:

1. How family living helps children learn about roles and relationships.
2. How children learn to identify with their sex role, and how parents can facilitate this.
3. How children's sexual awareness is developed, and the role of the family in this development.
4. Techniques that family members can use to answer their children's questions about sex.

La Familia y el Respeto (materials in English and Spanish)

This multimedia training package presents parents with information about the importance of the self-concept, factors in the development of the self-concept, and the resolution of family conflicts through mutual respect. It provides parents with the opportunity to consider and discuss information, ideas, and situations presented. Through the use of discussions, parents are encouraged to share their ideas and feelings about the session topics. The goals of the package are:

1. To increase parents' understanding of how a child's self-concept develops.
2. To improve parents' skills in promoting strong and healthy

self-concepts in their children.

3. To increase parents' understanding of how children identify with their sex group (male or female) and their cultural group.
4. To increase parents' understanding of the importance of identifying with positive models from these groups.
5. To increase parents' understanding of the meaning of mutual respect in family relationships.
6. To improve their skills in fostering mutual respect among all family members.
7. To make parents aware of a six-step process that can be used to resolve conflict through mutual respect.

The materials are designed so that each session begins with a recap of the previous one, so that it is possible for a parent to join the group in a later session without too much difficulty. The materials provide an outline of topics to be covered and suggestions for the discussion. The actual implementation, however, depends to a great degree on the resources of the leader and the nature of the group.

Language heterogeneity proved to be a problem for all the groups. Some women were recent immigrants who had not yet learned enough English, and at least one young mother had lost her ability to communicate in Spanish. In consequence, a fair amount of time had to be devoted to translating or explaining media that was not in Spanish.

B. The Participants

The participants in these workshops were a fairly heterogeneous group. Although all of them were Mexican or Mexican American, their language skills varied significantly and unsystematically. In addition, these are parents of school age children, and thus present a greater range of ages and larger families. There were no income guidelines, and the only limitation was that the child be enrolled in a school within the district. The parents were recruited from seven different schools within the District, located in three clusters in different parts of the city. The socioeconomic levels of these families was more variable than any of the other programs. Included were some families below poverty guidelines and others where only the husband was employed. Parents in these groups differed from parents in other programs in that their children were school age, rather than preschool. In several cases, grandmothers who were responsible for caring for children attended the activities.

The School-Community Liaison Program uses personal contacts as a recruitment strategy. The Community Representatives had engaged in home visiting and personal contacts with parents throughout the year. Some attempted to make their offices an open and inviting place where parents could just drop in, and many parents did. When the workshops were organized, the Community Representatives proceeded to "invite" a number of parents that they thought would be interested, willing, and able to attend. Thus, the participating parents' only expectations were those that the Community Representative had created. Their presence in the workshops did not derive from consciousness of a pre-existing "parenting problem." Rather, they took advantage of an opportunity that presented itself. A sense of social obligation to accept the "invitation" motivated many participants, as if not coming would lead to breaking a social rule.

This does not mean that the parents who participated in the workshops did it only out of a sense of obligation. The participants interviewed valued the chance to be with other parents, the free babysitting, and chatting with other mothers in a relaxed atmosphere, as much as any knowledge obtained in the workshops.

C. Impact

The hierarchial and cross-cutting formal links from the program to other parts of the school system and the set of formal program objectives can potentially mislead an investigator who may think that these formal properties of the program somehow imply or determine actual structural characteristics of the program. During the course of field work, we found it useful to conceive of this program as part of a "loosely-coupled system," to borrow a phrase from John Meyer (1977). Schools are unlike other kinds of organizational structures in complex societies, in that they are highly permeable to the political and social environment in which they exist, with various parts of the organization responding separately to various elements in the environment. Unable to bind itself effectively and control the way that the environment impinges on its work, schools have a much more difficult time structuring a tight division of labor and allocation of responsibility.

Unlike industrial organizations, for example, schools cannot efficiently turn out "products" because they cannot control the "core" processes in any kind of mechanistic way. Were schools to be measured in any strict cost-benefit evaluation comparable to those of other complex organizations they clearly would have gone bankrupt long ago. This comparison is not to suggest that schools "fail" as organizations. It simply indicates that their nature is distinctly different from other kinds of organizations. Their "raw material" is, after all, a wide variety of children's potential. And they share the responsibility of children's socialization, not only with each child's family, but with virtually everyone in the society concerned about future generations. Furthermore, insofar as schools are not responsible merely to children, but to entire communities of adults, they sometimes end up having little to do with children, except as symbolic expressions of adults' conflicting political, social and economic concerns. In other words, schools are preeminently in the spotlight playing to a wide and critical audience, many of whom think they can do better.

If Meyer's argument is accepted, then we would expect the formal properties of schools to reveal little of what goes in them. We suggest that this is true, even when schools undertake strenuous efforts to establish formal objectives, evaluate performance, and rationalize their organizational structure. These efforts make schools appear more "rational" than they are, given the nature of their enterprise.

As part of a loosely coupled system, the School-Community Liaison Program proved far more amenable to an analysis of its politics than of its cultural impact on families. It was apparent through interviews with parents and observation of home visiting and parent workshops that the program helped legitimize the institution of school and helped carry out its functions. It was also apparent that the Parent Advisory Council and the program staff attempted to represent sentiments of the Mexican American community to the school administration. These political functions of promoting the authority of school in the community and representing the community to the school seemed to have little to do with changing the role of mothers, addressing basic child-rearing values, or intervening in the life of families, as was true of other programs studied.

This program is clearly not a "school" for parents as is the Mother Child Development Program. It is not a voluntary organization of mothers as is the Association of Mothers. It is not a semi-institutionalized support group or seminar serving parents, as is the Effective Parenting Course. It may be like any one of these in a given instance and attempt to reorient, reinforce or elaborate the parental role of participants. But its impact seems determined almost exclusively by people and policies of the school system of which it is a part, rather than as a discrete and autonomous operation. The program is an adjunct to a larger institution rather than a bounded entity in itself. Whatever its impact in a given instance, the impact as a whole is diffuse.

For example, the impact of the Home-Based Curriculum component of the program depended on classroom teachers' willingness and competence in teaching the unit to program children. It depended on the degree to which a principal allowed the community representative to leave school on home visits and take compensation time for night visits. Sometimes, principals did not support the program as fully as program staff wanted. They expected community representatives to act more as school aides than as home visitors. The impact of the program depended on the degree to which teachers and principals welcomed parents on field trips associated with the home based curriculum. In some cases, schools cancelled the potential effectiveness of the program by discouraging parental involvement. The impact of the program depended on the recruitment and random selection procedures established by the central administration's office of evaluation. These various contingencies derived from the organizational embeddedness of the program within the school system itself. They augmented the contingencies common to more autonomous parent education programs: coordination with varying parental values, problems, needs, time schedules, and family circumstances. As a result, a scattershot impact could be expected.

When staff of the program were interviewed, they defined themselves as more in the role of generalized school personnel than as parent education specialists. They saw their effectiveness in terms of a particular school's relationship with the community more than as a result of the content or form of parent education workshops per se. Parents interviewed reacted to the school as a whole, rather than to the discrete activities associated with the parent education activities. Thus the impact of the School-Community Liaison Program is obscured by the larger school structure.

Because neither community representatives nor participants perceived this program as necessarily a "parent education" program, the parent education activities often attracted people who no longer had small children of their own. In some cases these people were grandmothers with some child care responsibilities. In other cases, they were women who wanted to participate in a social activity connected with the school. Many of the parents involved had children of different ages. Some parents were concerned about their teenage children, others with elementary aged children, and others with preschool children. This heterogeneity distinguished the program from the other programs studied, programs in which the parents were all dealing with problems of preschool children. Thus the program did not draw people concerned with a common problem.

For the various reasons cited above, data collection and field work at this site yielded few valid generalizations about cultural changes among participating families. Insights concerning individuals were not corroborated by other examples. Emergent hypotheses about the program could not be confirmed. The research questions posed seemed inappropriate to the nature of the program. While some parent education activities obviously do take place through the school system, their impact could only be determined by focusing on the larger question of school-community relations, of which the parent education activities are only one part.

APPENDIX II: FIELD PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The following is a site by site account of the procedures followed to gain entry to each site, the activities undertaken at each site to secure data, and the activities necessary to maintain a level of visibility and continuity that would insure a continuing relationship with the site.

A. The Mother Child Development Program

Located in San Antonio, Texas, the Mother Child Development Program is a replication of a model of parent child education originally developed in another large Texas city.

FACS gained full clearance for all its proposed research activities with the director of the MCDP. The director of in-center activities cooperated in making time available for interviews with parents participating in the program. Staff members agreed to be interviewed as well. In return for permission to study the MCDP, FACS provided the Center with SEDL training materials and agreed to conduct a workshop in the spring.

Observations began in early September 1978, at the onset of a new semester of classes. Regular morning activities at the Center and evening meetings of participants and family members were attended. Researchers attended a weekend workshop as well.

Interviews were conducted by three people, two regular male staff members of FACS, and one female interviewer employed for this series of interviews. The third interviewer was a Chicana. Her participation in FACS interviews with Chicana mothers at the MCDP served to check possible differences in the quality of interviews conducted by the other two interviewers, both

Spanish-speaking males.

Parents willing to be interviewed were secured by the in-center director of the MCDP. She approached individuals and asked if they were willing to be interviewed. Those parents who volunteered were then introduced to FACS interviewers. Interviews were conducted and taped in three separate offices at the center. Only the interviewer and the informant were present. Interviews were scheduled in morning hours when parents' absence from other center activities would not be missed. The language of preference of the informant was used in each interview.

Various documents of the MCDP were secured. These included curriculum notebooks, published evaluations, and program handouts.

A tentative timeline of data collection activities for the MCDP was developed, and interviewing of parents in the program was to have been completed by the end of November. FACS expected to interview twelve to fifteen parents. Interviewing of staff was scheduled to begin in the first week of December and continue into the second week. At least six staff members were to be interviewed. Observation was to continue throughout this time. A final graduation and Christmas party for one group of parents was to take place on December 20.

Unanticipated developments at the MCDP forced modification of the field study plan. During the second week of November, a financial crisis that had been brewing for some time finally affected the operation of the program. Verbal commitments for support from various private and public sources failed to materialize in time to meet payroll projections for December, and the decision was made to suspend temporarily the operations of the program until funds had been secured and a continuous operation could be assured. Through-

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out this period, the Program Director, Assistant Director and a skeleton crew were kept to coordinate the fund raising activities. In the meantime, FACS researchers continued in close contact with program personnel and secured their cooperation to continue with interviews in the homes of some participants in spite of the suspension of activities.

In the spring, 1979, FACS had hoped to deepen its understanding of the MCDP by observing some of the home-visiting component of the program. Instead, more intensive observation of the instructional component and staff interviews were conducted, to make up for the time lost during the suspension of activities.

B. The Association of Mothers

The Association of Mothers is an organization of approximately 200 mothers in a large Texas City. Initial contacts with the founder of the Association of Mothers and board members were established in November 1978. FACS presented a formal proposal of its research activities to the Board of Directors, and full approval was granted.

Observations were conducted at monthly general meetings open to nonmembers, starting in October. The general meetings, held on the second Monday of the month, lasted approximately two and one half hours. A total of five general meetings were observed over the course of the next several months. Also, four board meetings were attended. The board normally met during the first week of the month, for about two and one half hours. Additional activities, including a conference planning team, were also included in the observations. A few documents are produced by the Association of Mothers. These include a monthly newsletter, membership lists, and topics and speakers from previous meetings. These were secured and examined.

Because there was no information available on the demographic characteristics of the membership, FACS proposed to conduct a survey to gather standard demographic information plus program specific information including length of membership, motivation for preparation, types of activities engaged in, etc. The survey was mailed with a cover letter to all members of the Association. A phone follow-up of recipients of the survey was conducted to increase the return rate. The results of the survey comprise the bulk of the information concerning the general characteristics of the membership of the Association.

The Association of Mothers was organizationally a more diffuse program than other programs included in the FACS study. The regularly scheduled meetings, including board, general, and neighborhood meetings, each occur once a month. The general meetings were held at various locations; the board meetings also moved location, and neighborhood meetings changed with each meeting to a member's home. It was expected that observation of these settings would provide FACS with valuable information about the group. However, the bulk of the information came from the interviews. The interviews with Association participants, including both members and board members, turned out to be lengthy and more detailed than interviews conducted at other sites.

The indepth interviews were conducted by the female FACS researcher who also attended all other meetings. Interviews were conducted in the homes of the leaders with a modified version of the interview schedule developed to be used across programs. This was necessitated by the peculiar nature of the leaders in this program who, in theory and practice, are drafted from the ranks of the membership and not hired or appointed by anyone else. The interview schedule used with regular members was the same one used in the other programs.

A total to ten interviews were conducted with regular members selected at random from the membership roster of the organization. Of thirteen members of the Board that constitutes the leadership of the organization, eleven were interviewed. The two left out held the same position as other members interviewed. Thus, at least one incumbent for every position was interviewed.

C. River City Parent-Child Association Effective Parenting Course

The River City Parent-Child Association regularly sponsors a parent education course open to the pbulic. The Effective Parenting Course (EPC) is usually offered three to four times a year. It consists of six to eight meetings, once a week. Curriculum is somewhat predetermined but discussion of participants' problems with their children is also emphasized.

FACS made initial contacts with the River City EPC coordinator of parenting courses and the instructor of the course. The instructors agreed to allow full participation of researchers in a later course, at which time more systematic observation would take place and all participants would be interviewed.

Preliminary observation began in November 1978 at the first meeting of Effective Parenting Course. One FACS staff member attended the sessions in order to provide the baseline information necessary to develop observational techniques for a spring course. Given the fact that these programs are short in duration, often follow a diffuse format which includes both preset curriculum and parent-guided discussions on a number of topics, an extended period of preliminary observation was necessary. These preliminary observations gave FACS staff members clues about categories which are particularly important in these types of courses. These observational guidelines were used in the next course in the spring of 1979. The parent educator of that course then agreed to FACS' participation in the program for these purposes.

The course manual for the EPC was secured and examined. No demographic data was available for the participants of the course used for preliminary observation, and interviews were not conducted with participants at that time.

During the spring, two FACS researchers attended the EPC sessions as regular participants, paying the fee. During the first session, their identity and double purpose were revealed to participants, and their agreement for continuing was secured. There were no objections to the presence of the two FACS researchers, one a male Hispanic (non Mexican American) father of two girls, and the other a married childless Anglo woman. The group agreed to allow for the indepth individual interviews later, and in all but two cases these interviews were accomplished. The omissions did not appear motivated by any special circumstance beyond a busy schedule by one participant and vacation for the other. Most of the interviews were conducted in homes, with the exception of two males interviewed by the male FACS researcher in quiet restaurants during working hours. In all cases but one, a tape recording was made of the interviews. The exception was a man particularly concerned with being tape recorded, a concern that he also brought up during one session when another participant wanted to get a tape of the session she would have to miss.

D. The School-Community Liaison Program

FACS established initial contacts with supervisory personnel of the School-Community Liaison Program. A public meeting of the parent advisory board was attended and observed. In October 1978, FACS was requested to make a formal presentation of its research activities to the director of the program and the school district's Office of Research and Evaluation. An application was filed at that time. The Office of Research and Evaluation impaneled a review committee to consider FACS request. Its favorable decision was reached in January 1979 after many program activities were already underway.

Pending approval of our application for research by the school district, observations of the Parent Advisory Board, a public meeting, were conducted. After approval, FACS staff attended staff training sessions and accompanied the Community Representatives on their last round of home visits for that component of the program. After that, Parent Workshops were held. Researchers attended three different four-session workshops in three different schools, led by different leaders and having a different content. Four parents from each workshop were selected on the basis of attendance and willingness to be interviewed. After that, the five Community Representatives who conducted the workshops were interviewed with the standard Staff Interview Schedule used across programs with the necessary modification to fit the needs and characteristics of each setting.

The brief descriptions of implementation of the field study plan fails to reveal the many problems and peculiarities that researchers confronted in their extensive dealings with the people and institutions involved.

The process of gaining permission to intrude in the lives of people and organizations in the name of research entails a great deal of bargaining and negotiation. In the case of Project FACS, there were few services or resources that could be offered in exchange for participation. The main commodity available is the information to be generated by the study. To a greater or lesser degree, the possibility, form, and timing of such feedback entered into the negotiation process.

In each case entree was characterized by the style and organization of the respective agency. In all cases, FACS attempted to impress the "gatekeepers" with the potential general usefulness of the information to be gathered for the good of policy and program development in the area of parent education. In some cases these claims were met with more practical requests for a view on how this information could or would be of use to each individual program.

In the case of a well developed bureaucracy, such as the River City Independent School District, requests for research permission are not rare. The organization has developed a mechanism to handle and screen the requests, with an explicit criteria to be used by a set of reviewers. The screening amounts to a determination of the extent to which activities of the outside research team may supplement, alter, interfere, replace or contradict the already existing plans developed by the Office of Research and Evaluation, a group charged with these functions. The positive but uneasy reaction to the FACS request by officials of this office stemmed from the possiblity that FACS could provide some depth to areas that were thinly covered in a parent questionniare administered as part of the Bilingual Program Evaluation. The program personnel had endorsed the FACS request because it had the potential of providing them with some more qualitative "evaluation data." There seemed to be a feeling of dissatisfaction with the scope and purpose of the evaluation plans of ORE. The stated hope was that more indepth and open inquiry might help staff to document additional areas of impact that are not currently considered. There is one formally agreed upon feedback mechanism to program personnel. It is expected that pertinent portions of the FACS Final Report, as well as a face to face session with staff of the program, might shed some light not only on what they are doing right, but also provide some insight into potential activities to strengthen the program in the future. In this case the gatekeepers were not individuals involved directly in program operation. The FACS effort fell somewhere in between program people and the quality-control agent, and it was perceived by both as potentially useful for their own needs.

It should be pointed out, however, that negotiation and entree proved a continuing problem in the program, due to the number of different offices and officials, in addition to those whom we wanted to interview, whose approval and trust had to be won over. The resulting days in initiating research, in scheduling interviews, and in conducting observations shortened the total amount of time which could be spent at this site, before the school year ended. Moreover, since many of the individuals holding different jobs in the school system were motivated to provide the researchers with different information and points of view, sometimes only marginally related to parent education, a continuing problem on entree was defining the research role and interest. The brief account of findings at this site reflects these difficulties.

Requests for feedback from the Association of Mothers took a rather different form. Here, the group acting as gatekeeper was itself a rather major subject of the study. The Board of the Association received a formal request of FACS and considered it in the presence of two FACS researchers. The negotiation process was explicit and open, with one member asking exactly why they should give their time and privacy to this endeavor. FACS had already determined the prior need of the group for assistance in conducting a general survey of the membership. This coincided with a need of FACS to have enough data to characterize in general the population drawn to this type of organization. The offer to assist with the survey in exchange for use of the resulting information was accepted by the Board. That, however, did not meet completely the needs for reciprocal trading with the group. A growing organization that can afford to have an outsider examine its inner workings can surely use that information. The main gatekeeper, founder, president and overall leader had already expressed privately how potentially useful it would be to get this "unbiased" view of her organization, now that it was beginning to bloom and grow beyond the control of her blueprint. During the meeting, the FACS team argued for the need to preserve the anonymity of the interview data to be gathered. It was agreed that a general summary of the material gathered in interviews may be deemed useful to the group. It may be shared in a feedback session or through a written summary at the termination of the study if the group requests it.

At the Mother-Child Development Program, the negotiations for entree included the promise of certain institutional services that SEDL could provide in the form of training and loaning some mateirals. These materials, for training day care workers, were used at MCDP in training sessions for classroom preschool teachers. They were not used to train parent education personnel. In addition, the sole gatekeeper expressed interest in having some general feedback on our findings. The experimental nature of the program had already placed some heavy demands for providing access to other activities that are part of the overall national operation. In this case, however, the expectation of a more constant and continuous presence by the FACS researchers in the site seemed to offer the gatekeeper hopes for more meaningful feedback. It appeared that the quality, quantity and timeliness of the feedback obtained from the supervisory organization was not deemed satisfactory and useful. The gatekeeper was already convinced of the value of research and was willing to take a chance on a different set of individuals, in this case the FACS team.

In the case of the last site, the Effective Parenting Course sponsored by the River City Parent Child Association, entree and negotiations were helped by the gatekeeper's recognition of the legitimacy and competence of the institution (SEDL, and specifically the FACS team). No special requests for feedback were advanced by this individual. The negotiation for actual study, however, included securing permission from the parents participating in the course, both individually and as a group. At that time no special feedback plans were made. It is assumed that this group valued research and the behavioral and social sciences enough to submit to this invasion on their privacy. One indication of their positive orientation was their self-selection for a course that would make available to them some concepts and techniques based on psychological and social research.

A common theme present in the expectations held by both parties in site negotiations was that the researchers were capable of obtaining and presenting a balanced and fair picture of what is going on in each program. These expectations are based on assumptions that need to be made explicit. First, it is assumed that as outsiders, researchers stand a good chance to be trusted to a sufficient degree by most members of the organization. This is because as outsiders the research team has nothing to gain and no ax to grind. The degree to which each individual feels free to refuse to cooperate in the research will obviously affect this trust. Second, it is assumed that the researchers' mobility and access to the various types and levels of individuals in the organization would permit obtaining a more complete picture than that which any given segment can get by itself. Having access to both staff and participating mothers, but being neither, is an advantage in gaining a perspective on the program. Third, the previous work of the research team in the area of Parent Education provides program people with some guarantee that the findings and observation will be tempered with a certain degree of familiarity and understanding of the difficulties and promises of their work. Mutual trust and empathy can be generated from such a cooperative perspective. Fourth, the motivations and intentions of the research team can be assumed to be devoid of any hidden agenda. In spite of the perception on the part of many program people that our job is to evaluate their program and their performance, the fact that the funding source for our work is a completely independent agency serves to relieve some unavoidable amount of "evaluation anxiety." Despite our claims that we are conducting policy research, and that our findings would not be used to make decisions about their specific program, an element of evaluation is certainly built into the examination of programs that we have proposed. The determination of the nature of the treatment (process) and the areas of impact (summative) make the findings about any given program a form of evaluation. The increasingly popular use of ethnographic approaches to evaluation of educational programs has created a host of concerns on the part of both evaluators under contract and officials giving the contracts. Project FACS' only advantage over those engaged in outright evaluation is that we have some degree of control over how our findings are presented, to whom they are presented and when they are presented. We owe no special loyalty to any program official, and the best guide to the disposition of our findings lies with our ethical standards and concern for the rights of individuals and organizations.

In the initial phases of theoretical discussions, research design, and implementation of field study, the three members of the FACS team collaborated closely in order to achieve a unity of purpose and action. With the initiation of field study in several sites, a division of labor among the FACS researchers arose. One researcher assumed the major responsibility for observation of activities in the Association of Mothers. Another assumed major responsibility for observation of the MCDP, and the third took the main responsibility for observation of the RCPCA parenting course. The School-Community Liaison Program was covered by the two bilingual researchers. This division of labor resulted from the particular qualifications each researcher brought to the sites, qualifications which were deemed the most appropriate for entree and rapport with informants; e.g., a woman makes the best researcher in one site; speaking Spanish is best suited for the second and fourth sites, while being a parent is required for the third.

To balance this assignment of separate responsibilities, each researcher participated in some data collection in each site. Each researcher engaged in a small amount of observation in sites where she/he did not have major responsibility.

With this coordination of group effort, FACS sought to maximize the advantages of team ethongraphy. The obvious advantage of team ethnography is the multiplication of the amount of research which can be accomplished in a given time period. More pertinent, perhaps, is the improvement of research quality. Regardless of agreements on theoretical approach and the elaboration of uniform methodological protocols, ethnography relies on the acuity of an individual observer to a greater degree than any other research method. A human observer can take in and process more information than a sheaf of questionnaires and can then cross-examine the source of information to confirm conclusions or dig deeper into the significance of information. Yet, a single individual, however sensitive, must select something to pursue at the expense of other information. At the same time, the individual may operate under implicit assumptions or draw inferences which shape the "objectivity" of the data.

A team approach enables each individual to test his/her observations on others and at the same time be tested by others. In fact, "team research allows, indeed requires, each member to critically consider the work of all the other members at each step in the process." (M. A. Pitman, "Contract Ethnography: A Team Documentation Approach to Educational Evaluation." AAA meetings, 1978, 8.)

During the data collection phase of FACS, each member had at least some experience in all sites as a basis for critically considering other members' interpretations of data generated at each site. To facilitate an exchange of viewpoints, FACS met regularly to discuss findings as they emerged. In addition, regular informal conversations took place, and all field notes were copied and shared among team members. In several cases, conversations of impressions immediately following a site visit were taped so that they could be referred to later. More often, however, researchers refrained from communicating impressions to each other until field notes were written, in order to avoid "contaminating" each person's distinct observations. Collaboration in ethnographic research required a balancing act wherein distinctive points of view were maintained within a unified structure of inquiry.

APPENDIX III: NATURE AND CATEGORIES OF DATA

Each parent education program was conceived as an aggregate of human beings, who, over the course of time, develop a more or less patterned and a more or less shared system for understanding one another. This conceptualization is underscored by a number of assumptions about what happens when human beings come together in social groups. First, it presupposes that each person entering a particular social scene will bring with him or her an already extant body of knowledge, understandings, behaviors, speech styles, and orientations to what is going on around them. Second, that this background orientation or culture will not be shared equally with others. Third, that human beings work to understand or make sense out of what is going on around them. Fourth, that this work of understanding one another is based on observable social behavior which is accessible to interactants and is therefore available to be interpreted by them. Fifth, that it is this flow of social action and interaction, and the informal logic of this flow, which constitutes the culture of the group.

This conceptualization had specific implications for the way FACS approached the study of parent education programs. Most importantly, it implied the need to base analyses on what the participants think is going on or, more accurately, on researchers' interpretations of what they think is going on.

The analysis of data collected for this study incorporates both the emic and etic approaches to conceptualization. By emic we are referring to analysis from the point of view of the participants' ways of categorizing and attributing meaning to the events of their lives. Emic analyses attempt

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to discover how people construe their world from the way they talk about it. It involves eliciting--usually through intensive, in-depth interviews--meaningful sets of contrasting responses appropriate to a given context. For example, peoples of highly industrialized societies including the United States divide people into at least two categories: adults and children. Children can then be further divided by age into sub-categories such as infants, toddlers, preschoolers, elementary schoolers, adolescents and teenagers. For any of these (or other) sub-categories people have definitions of what kinds of behavior constitute the "good" from the "problem" child. The constellation of behaviors that describe the "good" child are, of course, culturally defined. Emic analyses of participant and staff definitions of child behavior and the degree to which they articulate are useful in revealing the underlying assumptions of the parent education program.

Etic analyses are conducted from the "outsider's" or researcher's point of view and category system(s). These categories may or may not be relevant to the participants' system of meaning. Etic inquiry is an attempt to discover patterns of behavior that are defined by the observer. Most social science research in the United States relies on etic analyses. A priori concepts such as socioeconomic status, gender, IQ, place of residence and so forth are constructed independently of a given set of persons. Then relationships to other a priori concepts (achievement, leadership, self-concept, etc.) are established. The purpose of etic analysis is to assess conceptual categories in light of their relevance for theoretical problems.

There are genuine differences between these two approaches to data collection and analysis, but, as Erickson (1977) has suggested, they need nct be antithetical. The point at which these two approaches can articulate is the nexus between form and function. Etic analyses can tell us the extent to which contexts are similar and, therefore, comparable, emic analysis can tell us the meaning of the context for the people involved. In the present instance, two parent education programs can be similar with respect to the size of the group, the curriculum pursued and the organizational structure employed. The functional relevance of these aspects, however, may be very different. More specifically, a single curriculum can be culturally reinforcing for one group and culturally reorienting for another. For example, many parent education programs offer advice about how to facilitate mother-child separation at the preschool stage. For certain mothers this is a meaningful process demanded by their conception of the parent-child relation. For others, separation at this stage is a mystifying notion and, prior to participation in a program, neither a meaningful nor a problematic concern.

The primary elicitation technique for our emic analyses were structured interviews with staff and participants. In these interviews we tried to elicit from both staff and parents meaningful sets of contrasting responses related to the following general semantic domains: 1. their philosophy of children and child rearing, 2. the relationships between parent and children in the home, 3. their perceptions of parenthood, 4. their knowledge and use of community organizations and resources, 5. prior exposure to parent education, 6. their perception of other participants in the programs, 7. their perception of activities and goals of the program, 8. their perceptions of interactions between participants, 9. information flow within the program, and 10. evaluative judgments of participants about the program.

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

STAFF INTERVIEW

Demographics

1. Where were you born? When?

   Where were you raised? (If different from local area: How long have you lived here?)

2. Do you have any children? (If yes) How many? Ages and sex?

3. Where were they born?

4. Besides you (and your children) who else lives in your househol

5. Do the other people in your household work? Occupation ______

6. What language do you speak at home?

7. What is your religious affiliation, if any?

Professional Background and Orientation

8. Could you briefly tell me about your educational background? (Probe--high school, college, graduate work: highest level concentration, major)

9. Are you taking courses at this time?

10. What is the exact name of your position here at ______________?

11. How long have you been in that position?

12. Could you briefly tell me what two positions you held before starting here?

13. Do you belong to any professional associations? What other kinds of community organizations do you belong to?

14. Prior to being a staff member here, had you ever worked with or participated in any other program or agency dealing with parents?

15. What were the major attractions for you at the time you decided to apply/take this job? (Probe--What persons influenced your decision? How did you find out about this program?)

16. What was the hiring process like?

17. After becoming a staff member (PEd), did the program provide additional training for the position?

    (If yes) Who did the training?
    How long did it last?
    What in general were you trained to do?

PEP

18. What in general are the duties of someone in your position?

19. Could you describe for me a typical (day/session/meeting), what your responsibilities would be and how your time is allocated?

20. Sometimes we feel that we have had a really good or memorable day/session/meeting. Can you recall such a time in this job? What happened? Please describe it. (Probe: Why was it so good?)

21. On some occasions it is the opposite. Can you recall a really bad time? Something that you regretted?

22. I know it is sometimes hard to pinpoint it, but would you try to explain to me what you try most to achieve as a _________?

Relationship Between Staff

23. What other staff people do you regularly work with in carrying out your duties?

24. How much responsibility do you have for choosing the various tasks or activities that are carried out in the program?

25. If there is a conflict over something you feel needs to be done, is there anyone who can overrule your decisions? Does this happen very often?

26. Did you know any of the other staff people before you started working here?

Relationship Between Staff & Parents

27. Did you know any of the parents from outside the program?

28. Do you ever get together with other staff members for social occasions? How often? With other educators, adm., other?

29. Do you ever get together with parents for a social occasion outside of the program's activities?

30. What do you feel are your major responsibilities to the parents in the program?

31. Is there ever a conflict over what the parents want to do and what the staff wants to do? Over what? How is it resolved? (Probe for examples.)

32. Do parents ever approach you to talk about personal problems that they might be having?

Parental Needs and Evaluation

33. What in general do you think the program is trying to do, the basic philosophy of the program?

34. What do you feel are the most important things that children learn from their parents?

35. What do you think are the biggest problems that parents in the program are facing?
(Probe: Could you describe for me the typical types of problems parents are having?)

36. How do you feel that this program is meeting some of the needs of the parents?
(Probe: Could you give me an example of a day/session/meeting that was particularly successful in meeting parents' needs?)

37. In your opinion which of the activities of the program are the most important?

38. In your opinion which of the activities of the program are the most successful?

39. Could you describe some of the changes you have observed in the parents as a result of their participation?

40. Are there any things about the program that you would like to see changed?

PARENT INTERVIEW

HELLO, MY NAME IS ____________________

I'M TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT BEING A PARENT MEANS THESE DAYS. I ALSO AM INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT HOW VALUABLE THIS (ORGANIZATION, PROGRAM) IS TO THE PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE. I WANT TO TAKE ABOUT AN HOUR OF YOUR TIME TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THESE THINGS. I WANT TO TAPE OUR CONVERSATION SO THAT I WON'T HAVE TO TAKE NOTES (PAUSE). NEITHER YOUR NAME NOR THE ORGANIZATION'S NAME WILL BE ATTACHED TO THE TAPE OR ANYTHING WRITTEN UP AS A RESULT OF OUR STUDY. NOTHING YOU SAY HERE WILL BE SHARED WITH EITHER THE STAFF OR THE OTHER MOTHERS. WHATEVER YOU TELL ME WILL BE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. I HOPE YOU WILL FEEL FREE TO TELL ME YOUR REAL FEELINGS. IF THERE'S ANYTIME YOU WOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WITH THE TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF, PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

FIRST, I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A COUPLE OF BACKGROUND QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN.

1. How many children do you have?
   How old are they?
   What are their names?
   Which child participates in the program?

2a. Tell me how is a typical day with your children.

2. Were they born here in (San Antonio or Austin)?

3. Where were you born? How old are you?

4. How long have you been living in this area?

5. Do you have relatives here in (Austin/San Antonio)? Relationship? (If close) How often do you visit with each other? When was the last time you visited with them?

6. Besides you and your children, who else lives in your household (names and relationships)?

ENTREVISTA CON MADRES

BUENOS DIAS. ME LLAMO ____________________

QUIERO SABER COMO ES LA EXPERIENCIA DE SER MADRE DE FAMILIA EN ESTOS DIAS. TAMBIEN ME INTERESA SABER QUE IMPORTANCIA TIENE ESTE PROGRAMA PARA LOS PADRES QUE PARTICIPAN. QUISIERA HABLARLE POR UNA HORA MAS O MENOS TOCANTE A ESTO. QUIERO GRABAR NUESTRA CONVERSACION PARA NO TENER QUE TOMAR NOTAS. NI SU NOMBRE NI EL DEL PROGRAMA VA A SALIR EN CUALQUIER REPORTE DE ESTE ESTUDIO. NADA QUE UD ME DIGA AHORA SERA COMUNICADO A OTRAS PERSONAS EN EL PROGRAMA. UD PUEDE HABLAR CON CONFIANZA. OJALA QUE UD SE SIENTA CON LIBERTAD PARA DECIRME SUS VERDADEROS SENTIMIENTOS. EN CUALQUIER MOMENTO QUE UD SE SIENTA MAS COMODA SIN LA GRABADORA POR FAVOR DIGAMELO.

PRIMERO QUIERO HACERLE ALGUNAS PREGUNTAS TOCANTES A UD Y SUS NIÑOS.

1.¿Cuántos niños tiene Ud?

¿Cómo se llaman? ¿Cuántos años tienen?
¿Cuál niño participa en el Programa?

2a. Cuénteme cómo es un día típico con los niños.

2. ¿Nacieron aquí en (San Antonio o Austin) ?

3. ¿Donde nació Ud? ¿Cuántos años tiene Ud ?

4. ¿Cuántos años tiene Ud de vivir en esta ciudad?

5. ¿Tiene Ud parientes aquí en la ciudad?

(si viven cerca...) ¿Qué tanto tiempo hace que no los v

6. Además de Ud y los niños, ¿quién más vive en la casa?

(nombres y relación o parentezco)

7. Have you ever worked? Yes___ No___ Occupation________	7. ¿ Ha trabajado Ud alguna vez?
8. Do the other people in the household work? Occupation ____________________	8. ¿Trabajan los demas en casa? ¿Qué hacen? o ¿ En qué trabajan?
9. What language do you speak at home?	9. ¿Qué idioma habla Ud en la casa?
10. How long have you been involved in (the center, organization)?	10. ¿Cuánto tiempo ha estado Ud en el programa?
NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IT IS LIKE BEING A PARENT FOR YOU:	AHORA QUIERO PREGUNTARLE TOCANTE A SU EXPERIENCIA COMO MADRE DE FAMILIA
1. Tell me about your children. (Probe: Are they very different?) (Probe: How do you get along with your children?)	1. Cuénteme...¿cómo son sus niños? ¿tienen caracteres distintos? ¿Cómo se lleva Ud con ellos?
2. What are the rules for your children in your house? Who makes the rules? How do you decide the rules?	2. ¿Cuales son las reglas para los niños en la casa? ¿Cómo se deciden las reglas? ¿Quién hace las reglas?
3. What are the most important things that children learn from their parents?	3. ¿Cuales son las cosas más importantes que los niños aprenden de sus padres?
4. What do you want for your children when they grow up?	4. ¿Qué quiere Ud para sus niños cuando sean grandes?
5. What are the most important things you can do for your children?	5. ¿Cuáles son las cosas más importante que Ud podría hacer para sus niños?
6. Do you feel you're raising your children the same way your parents raised you?	6. ¿Esta Ud criando a sus niños en la misma forma que sus padres la criaron a Ud?
What are you doing differently?	¿cuáles son las diferencias?
What's the same?	¿Cuáles son las semejanzas?
What do you think has made for these changes?	¿Qué es lo que ha creado estos cambios? ¿Porqué cambió ?
7. What do you like/enjoy most about being a parent?	7. ¿Qué es lo que más le gusta de ser madre?

8. What is the most difficult part about being a parent? If no answer: Is it hard to be a parent?

9. Compared with before you had children, do you feel differently about yourself now that you are a parent?

10. Do others treat you differently now that you are a parent?

11. What things did you do before you had a child that you miss doing now?

NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT WHAT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS YOU BELONG TO AND WHERE YOU MIGHT GO IF YOU NEED HELP WITH YOUR CHILDREN.

1. Do you go to any meetings sponsored by your:

Church
School
Local political organization
Neighborhood association

2. Are there any other types of organizations you belong to or gatherings that you regularly go to?

2a. Could you briefly describe what happens at the ______ meetings? (All groups mentioned in 1 or 2).

3. Do you meet people in these groups that you talk to about your children? (Ask about any group mentioned in 1 or 2.)

4. Besides coming to the (center), do you participate in any other types of activities or groups that have to do with your children?

5. Are most of the people you know parents? Do you talk about your children? What kinds of things do you talk about?

8. ¿Qué es lo más difícil tocante a ser madre? ¿Es difícil ser madre?

9. ¿Se siente Ud diferente ahora que tiene niño(s)?

10. ¿Siente que la tratan en forma diferente ahora que tiene niños?

11. ¿Hay algo que Ud hacía antes de ser madre que le gustaría hacer ahora?

AHORA QUIERO HACERLE ALGUNAS PREGUNTAS TOCANTE A OTRAS ORGANIZACIONES A LAS QUE UD PERTENECE Y ADONDE IRIA UD SI NECESITARA ALGUNA AYUDA CON SUS NIÑOS.

1. ¿ Asiste Ud a reuniones de

la Iglesia
la Escuela
grupos políticos
grupos de la comunidad?

2. ¿Hay algun otro grupo al que Ud pertenece?

2a. ¿Qué es lo que hacen en las juntas?

3. ¿Ha conocido personas en estos grupos con quienes platique acerca de sus niños?

4. Ademas de asistir al Programa' ¿participa Ud en alguna otra actividad o grupo que tenga que ver con sus niños?

5. ¿Son padres la mayoría de las personas que Ud conoce? ¿Platica mucho con ellos de sus niños? ¿De qué hablan?

6. Does anyone else help you take care of your children?

7. When you need to go out and you have to leave your children for awhile, who would most likely take care of them?

8. (For household members) Does _____ (husband, mother, etc.) ever help you with your children?

   What do they do?

   Do you usually agree about what to do and who should do it? Probe: Do you ever disagree?

9. When you've felt like you needed advice on some problem you're having with your children or just felt like talking about it, who do you usually go to?

10. The last time your child was sick, who did you talk to about it? (If doctor is answer, probe: If they were just sort of not feeling well, had a cold or something, who would you talk to about it?)

11. When you feel like your child is having a problem in school, what would you do?

12. When your child is acting up at home and doesn't mind you, do you talk to anyone about it? Who? What do you say?

NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT (PROGRAM).

1. Have you done any reading about being a parent? (If yes) What topics?

2. Have you ever gone to a workshop, program, training session before to learn about being a parent?

3. What do you usually call this place/this Program? What do you tell friends about it?

6. ¿Hay alguien que le ayude a cuidar los niños?

7. Cuando Ud tiene que salir, ¿quién se queda con los niños? ¿Quién le cuida los niños por un rato corto?

8. ¿ Le ayuda (mama, marido, etc) con el cuidado de los niños?

   ¿de que manera le ayuda? ¿qué hace él (o ella)?

   ¿Estan generalmente de acuerdo tocante a qué hacer o cómo hacerlo tocante a los niños o la casa? ¿Hay veces en que no estan de acuerdo?

9. Cuando Ud necesita consejo sobre algún problema de los niños o cuando quiere hablar con alguien, ¿a quién busca?

10. La última vez que estuvo enfermo su niño(a), ¿con quién habló Ud? (si respuesta es EL DOCTOR, pregunte por malestares menores.)

11. Si Ud cree que su niño(a) tiene algún problema en la escuela, ¿con quién hablaría Ud?

12. Si su niño(a) no se porta bien en la casa, ¿con quién hablaría Ud? ¿qué le diría ?

AHORA QUIERO QUE HABLEMOS SOBRE EL PROGRAMA

1. ¿Ha leidoUd libros o revistas tocante el cuidado de los niños?

2. ¿Ha asistido Ud antes a algún otro programa o curso para aprender algo tocante a ser madre?

3. ¿Cómo le dice o le llama Ud a este Programa? ¿Qué le cuenta Ud a sus amigos(as) sobre el programa?

4. How did you find out about __________________?
What did they tell you about the program?

5. Why did you decide to participate in _________?
Probe: Was this something you had thought about doing before? Then why did you decide to do this now?

6. What do you think the ____________(program) is trying to accomplish?

7. Could you tell me what you do at the center (meetings)? (Probe: on details of specific activities mentioned by informant; and on center activities not mentioned by informant in first response.)

8. Who chooses the activities?

9. Why do you think these activities were chosen?

10. Do you or any of the other parents have any say over what goes on?

11. What do the different staff people do?

12. Who do you talk to most when you are at the center (meetings)?

13. What do you talk about with them?

14. Have you ever asked anyone at ___________ for advice on any problems you might be having?

15. Did you know anyone in the ______ before you started coming here?

16. Do you ever spend time outside the center with people that you know from the program (organization)?

17. What kinds of things have you learned since coming to _____________?

4. ¿Como supo Ud sobre este Programa?
¿Qué le dijeron a Ud sobre el Programa?

5. ¿Qué la hizo decirse a participar en el Programa?
¿Fué algo que Ud había pensado hacer antes?
¿Penso Ud que era una buena idea participar? ¿Porq

6. ¿Qué cree Ud que trata de lograr este Programa?

7. Cuénteme tocante a lo que hacen en el Programa.
Busque detalles de actividades concretas.

8. ¿Quién escoge esas actividades?

9. ¿Porqué cree Ud escogieron esas actividades?

10. ¿Tiene Ud parte en escoger las actividades ?
¿Las otras madres?

11. ¿Qué hacen los distintos empleados(as) del Program?

12. ¿Con quiénes platica más cuando está en las juntas?

13. ¿De qué platican?

14. ¿Ha pedido consejo a alguien aquí alguna vez?

15. ¿Conocía Ud a alguien del Programa antes de entrar?

16. ¿Se junta Ud con alguien del Programa fuera de las juntas y actividades del Programa?

17. ¿ Qué cosas ha aprendido aquí en el Programa?

18. Have you made any changes in how to handle your children since you have been coming to the program (meetings)?	18. ¿Ha cambiado la forma en que Ud trata a los niños desde que comenzó en el programa?
19. Have there been any changes in your children's behavior?	19. ¿Han habido cambios en la forma de ser de sus niños?
20. What things in the program (meetings) have been especially valuable to you? (Ask for specific examples.) What has made them valuable to you?	20. ¿Qué parte del programa le ha servido más a Ud? ¿Qué cosa por ejemplo?
21. People do things in different ways and everyone doesn't always agree about how to do them. Are there things in the program you disagree with? (Ask for examples.)	21. A veces no todo el mundo está de acuerdo sobre qué se debe hacer. ¿Con qué cosas del programa no está Ud de acuerdo? Por ejemplo....
22. Sometimes people can't come to the center. What are some of the usual reasons why people can't come? What are some of the reasons you haven't come?	22. A veces algunas madres no pueden asistir a juntas o actividades del Programa. ¿Cuáles son las razones más comunes ? ¿Cuáles han sido sus razones?
23. How do you feel about the staff? Do you feel they are doing a good job? What makes for a good staff person?	23. ¿Qué le parecen a Ud los empleados(as) del Programa? ¿Cree Ud que trabajan bien? ¿Como debería ser un buen empleado?
24. Is there anything you would do differently?	24. ¿Hay algo del programa que Ud haría en forma distinta?
THANK YOU.	MUCHAS GRACIAS.

APPENDIX V: SURVEY

ASSOCIATION OF MOTHERS SURVEY

I. YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

1. Year of birth _________ Place of birth: City ______________ State ____

2. What is your marital status? (check one)

___Single (never married) ___Separated ___Remarried
___Single (divorced) ___Married ___Widowed

3. What ethnic group do you belong to? (check one)

___Anglo ___Mexican-American
___Black ___Other (please specify) ____________________

4. How many children do you have? _____ Please list the age and sex of each child from oldest to youngest:

age 1._____ 2._____ 3._____ 4._____ 5._____ 6._____ 7._____ 8._____

sex _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

5. Besides you and your children, who else lives in your household? (check all that apply)

___No one else ___Parents ___Other relative
___Husband ___Grandparents ___Friend
___Partner
___Other (please specify) ____

6. How many years have you lived in River City? _____Years _____Months

7. What is the highest grade you have completed in school? (circle one)

grade school   high school   some college   B.A.   some graduate work   M.A.   Ph.D.   M.D.   J.D.

8. What is the highest grade your husband/partner has completed in school? (circle one)

grade school   high school   some college   B.A.   some graduate work   M.A.   Ph.D.   M.D.   J.D.

9. What is your occupation? ______________________________________

Are you currently working for pay? Yes___ No___

If yes, what do you do? ______________________ Full-time___Part-time___

If no, have you ever worked for pay? Yes___ No___

If yes, what did you do? ______________________________________

10. What is your husband's/partner's occupation? ___________________________

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II. YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSOCIATION OF MOTHERS

11. How did you find out about The Association? (check one)

___From a friend
___Poster
___Other (please specify) ____
___Brochure
___Newspaper article
___Talk by an Association member
___TV talk show

12. Why did you decide to participate in The Association?

13. How long have you been participating in The Association? _____ Years
_____ Months

14. What kind of membership do you have in The Association? (check one)

___Annual (full year)
___Associate (by month)
___Subscriber (newsletter only)
___Not a member

15. How often do you go to general meetings? (check one)

___every month
___once every two months
___once every three months
___once every four months
___once every six months
___once a year
___less than once a year
___don't go

16. How often do you go to Board meetings? (check one)

___every month
___once every two months
___once every three months
___once every four months
___once every six months
___once a year
___less than once a year
___don't go

17. How often do you go to neighborhood meetings? (check one)

___every month
___once every two months
___once every three months
___once every four months
___once every six months
___once a year
___less than once a year
___don't go

18. Do you participate in any Association activities in addition to the ones listed above? (check all that apply)

___Conference preparation
___Conference attendance
___Other (please specify) ____
___Garage sale
___Other fund raising activities

19. How would you rate the support and help you receive from your husband/ partner for your participation and activities with The Association? (circle one)

very supportive   supportive   neutral   somewhat negative   negative

III. SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR YOU AS A MOTHER

20. Do you have relatives in the River City area? (check all that apply)

Your	Husband's/ Partner's	
___Mother	___Mother	___No relatives in area
___Father	___Father	___Other (please specify) ____________
___Sister	___Sister	
___Brother	___Brother	____________________________________
___Grandparents	___Grandparents	

21. How often do you and your relatives visit with each other? (check one)

___once a week or more
___twice a month
___once a month
___once every three months
___twice a year
___once a year
___less than once a year

22. How often do you visit with your husband's/partner's relatives, and how often do they visit with you? (check one)

___once a week or more
___twice a month
___once a month
___once every three months
___twice a year
___once a year
___less than once a year

23. Outside of The Association, what other groups, organizations, or voluntary work do you participate in?

24. Who takes care of your child(ren) while you are at Association activities? ____

25. Do you usually come alone or with a friend to Association activities?

___alone
___with a friend

26. Outside of regular meetings, how often do you have contact (by phone, visit, etc.) with other members of The Association? (check one)

___once a week or more
___twice a month
___once a month
___less than once a month
___no contact

27. What do you feel are your greatest needs as a mother?

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